

# Maclean's

Canada's Weekly Newsmagazine

April 3, 2000 www.macleans.ca

**MEDICARE**  
The Alberta Test

**THE POPE'S  
PILGRIMAGE**  
A Photo Diary



# Pssst! Wanna Buy a Passport?

**Inside the global forgery scam**

**How fake Canadian papers are  
feeding illegal immigration**



\$4.50











Anthony Wilson-Smith

\$100,000 would pay \$1,285 less than current levels. Day will find that red-neck beliefs and draconian fiscal policies don't fly well beyond Alabama.

Larvae Pellets, Culture

There is no room on the right for the Canadian Alliance, no matter who heads it. The Christian Liberals have already moved into the conservative end of the political spectrum as far as the discourse within them to see Western fundamentalism (like Goodwill) as right, trumping otherwise abhorred gay, abortion and homosexual issues, simply not going to appeal to as Ontario voters. The big opportunity for political power is on the left. People who took the time to listen to U.S. President Bill Clinton's magnificent state of the union address got a glimpse of our future: it is *multicultural, multi-racial, highly individualistic and heavily networked*. We are likely to see a new type of democratic socialism move into the vacuum created by conservative Liberals. It may not work. I expect the Confederation will respond with a broadening of their good-will agenda. The Prime Minister may be settling in for the long haul. And why not?

George Monro, Toronto

## Poetic licence

Alan Fotheringham's paragraphs have earned colloquial praise with A. E. Housman's poem "To An Arbore Vitae Young" ("Of pines and things," March 10). I have to question his assumption that the poem is relevant to his test, which is best as I can tell, after wading through the polemic digressions, only in yet another two-cadence worth of opinion on the remote history around the head incident. The obvious application of the poem to contemporary professional sports would be in consolation for athletes whose careers have been cut short by death (Giles Milne), or perhaps injury (Bobby Orr). The narrator says the equivalent of, "At least you were never under anything but your best, so leave your test not having to know old

weak and walk down Yonge Street with our loving scores of people recognize you." Feathering/hair should look more closely to "his favorite poet of all time" to avoid quoting him out of context.

**Thomas Alva, Detroit:** Our

### The Amiel challenge

**I have always enjoyed Barbara Amiel's thought-provoking columns in *Manifold*, and "On being 'right wing'" was exemplary (March 20). Even when I don't agree with her, she challenges her readers to think for themselves.**

Bryon Young, London, Gail

**I appreciate** Barbara Amiel's candor, and ability to spot hypocrisy. The overwhelming sense with which I leave Amiel's columns is let's look at ourselves before we judge. While this view may not lead itself to short-term solutions, it does suggest compassion, perspective and a level playing field for all. (My God! She's been a columnist all these years!)

Small Business, 2000

Although I am often shocked by Barbara Amiel's bold views, it may be only because my ear is so used to the voices espousing the popular agenda that to hear something contrary is indeed hearing. Even those who do not agree with Amiel should see her as a gift to our time. If it weren't for voices like hers, we could be in danger of another mass hypnotism and find ourselves well down the path to the next holocaust.

Doug Schevender, Calgary

**Barbara Azzini** voices the reason she is called night work: "it's only because the spirit of our times is left wing and more of our class, including the media, are imbued with this spirit." What does Millennium rock star? Bill Clinton? Mike Higgins and Paul Martin? Communism isn't all it'll be because the media is "imbued with a left-wing spirit" when the *National Post* has a labour section and *CFTV* gives a workers' report before its cheer-leading for e-voting and national funds.

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Van Wazer; (Art) Geoffrey Michael; Editorial  
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[illegible]

One truth about politics in a democracy is that truth is a commodity used sparingly—and so, for that matter, is democracy. Consider Canada's two most important political parties. No matter how many times John Gorton says he'll lead the Liberals into the next election, there are doubters who note that the PM couldn't say otherwise even if he did plan to step down. Then, there's Paul Martin, who recently said what a self-confident if the PM's job were open, he'd be interested. But Martin's assertion, Paul Adams wrote in *The Globe and Mail*, "suggested his supporters not only that they should not give up their efforts on his behalf, but that they also no longer need to hide their allegiance to his proto-campaign for the leadership." In other words, by telling the truth about his hopes for the future, Martin was declaring war on the Prime Ministerial axis.

Then, there is a flood of speech, which generally comes in long abundance (indeed political parties' primary Manning welcomed debate on whether Reform should dissolve and reenter itself — until key people opposed him. Randy Whise, the highly efficient House leader, was flummoxed, and Gene Wang, who chaired the executive council, quit under pressure. Thus, there are the Lobs again, a party in which you can say anything you want — so long as it plays with what the leader says. For most recent proof, see those MIs who told their constituents that the PM should step down. They were told to sit down and shut up by their leader — who added, for good reason, that they were probably speaking out of malice because they are mere MIs, not ministers. Now ahead a great way to make the approximately 125 Liberals who are in the cabinet feel fulfilled and useful. And just must all the more drive those ingrates go looking for money from Jane Seward's department.

Steve Trudner doesn't say, fondly, that it soon is they're "80 mads from Professor H.M." MP's are "new nobodies." Actually, it's the reverse. At home in their ridings, MPs are people of relative abundance, able to resolve problems for constituents, and to generate or shore down support to win government goals. If you think of one case what they do, ask any MP to whip-out their Day-Timer, guaranteed, it will be full of weekend engagements for everything from municipal hockey games to riding association meetings to church, synagogue and mosque branches. Or the IMA, local business groups into afternoon, the party whip tells them when attendance is mandatory when and how to vote, when and what questions they may ask in the Commons, and what answers are acceptable on the odd occasion that a reporter actually cares about the representatives.

The question it takes to get ahead in government isn't exact.

opponents of the deal make for a good reading MP at home, it's important to have a high profile and firm will, to guide commentators through mazes of bureaucracy, and to reassure civil servants who get in the way. That's distance behaviour in Ottawa, where bureaucrats alternately suckle at and ignore slowly backsliding, and a deputy minister will, if the MP gets too short, shut the door of the Policy Council to shut the prime minister to get the backslider to back off. A devoted MP reflects consumers' views without fear or favour—even when it means saying the PM should step down. But guess your chances of making the oblique if you do that? And elected MPs aren't alone in facing conflicting pressures that affect their livelihood. Lobbyists and lawyers often live so they can't make any money from volunteer political involvement. That's *voluntocracy*—but name one consultant or lawyer who ever *lost* business through being an intimate of the prime minister. But, due can both ways. If you're a big Paul Martin supporter, this used, the best time to be fed fat but not too incense contract.

**When it comes to** encouraging politicians to dissemble, hide their true thoughts and see the party line first of all, the media are not only enablers—we encourage such acts. When Liberal MP Stan Kayes, Duane MacIsaac and Neuk Dispersis told us they consistently thought the PM should step down before the next election, the PM wasn't the first to suggest they might have ulterior motives: several columnists beat him to the punch. So much for expressing your views forthrightly. And then a pundit in *Canada's* view of politicians: we routinely think less—but demand more—of them than we do of ourselves. How many Canadians would absolutely, definitely wear their T-shirt with the same logo for the next four years—even if something better were to come up? And how many people would discuss personal plans at all with a mob of reporters mauling every word?

It's reminiscent of that *Seinfeld* episode where Jerry is doing his nightclub act, and a friend of Kramer's heckles him wildly. The next day, a furious Jerry shows up at the heckler's office to rag her back; she becomes angry and baffled when she's subjected to the same treatment she meted out.

It's right to rip politicians for useless, self-serving things, like handing out money to supporters for questionable projects—or if the private transfer proves cynical enough to do so, calling an early election that fall for self-serving partisan reasons. But the flap about disclosing personal plans is something that you get when you desire, and that applies to voters as much as to the people they vote for. It also explains why politicians today can consider three categories of filth: lies, dirty lies—and the ones we make 'em all to protect their jobs.

# Overture

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Edited by Anthony Wilson-Smith  
Web Shanda Deziel



Gary Chalkin



Angie Kincaid



Gary Carter

## Over and Under Achievers

### The sweet sound of Sussex

All the names from A (Alma) to Z (Zelman)

◆ **Alma**: Children: PM's biggest post-9/11 music to soothe anxious children (Linda, Paul Martin) at 24 Sussex. But no *Alma's Choice*.

◆ **Refoton Party**: Weekend vote on disbanding party shows that among 2001-to-be former Reformers. RIP (Rest-in-party).

◆ **Alma's Mission**: Gen are proven in New York in *The Virgin Atlantic*, playing angry, sexually explicit performer. How ever did they think of her for the part?

◆ **The Gears Who**: Dramatic motion picture. But can Randy Bachman still get guitar on stage?

◆ **Gary Brennan**: Who's NHL.com? Has he not seen hockey? Or speak up. Or act on violence. Or ...

◆ **Vince Carter**: Americans were Bop-son star back in U.S. of A. Gears they find playing in sneakers is hurting his game.

## Tip Checks

### Silk, sex and latex

Sexy is in sex dresses. At a Toronto fashion show last week, a critic described the collection by one of Canada's hottest designers, Joffrey Cass, as "the sexiest show I've seen." It includes several latex-length skirts, purple, yellow and blue silk blouses with puff sleeves and red necks, purple velvet plaid coats, and orange latex-toe socks. The show is down more "sexy" a royal-blue patent-leather behind stretch coat. Warning: sexiness may diminish in male from models to retailers.



### Music that's di-vinyl

Drop the needle! The supposedly obsolete turntable has retained passion in each of the past two years in a new generation has discovered how to use it as a musical instrument. DJs at live events manipulate or scratch vinyl on a turntable to create new patterns of music. "It's become a movement—like skateboarding or rollerblading," says Kane, owner of Montreal's Moog Audio store. "Now, a lot of kids want to be a DJ." His store sells 60 to 70 DJ turntables a month.



So can you move your dusty old system for big bucks to a hopeful album-scratcher? No way—anyone can try the only model worth "spinning on" is the \$750 Technics SL1200MK. Anything else is just "Dad's old player."

Shanda Deziel

## Web Watch

### 'E'-nuff! @dot.coms!

How do you make your new company sound clever and boring? Give it an "e" prefix, like "eBay" or "e-commerce," says the San Jose Mercury News, which covers the online industry exten-

sively. "E starts to drive you to a mild 'Oh kind of company,'" said one expert. Other dated words or expressions include "cyber"—and anything beginning with a capital letter, because it was an extra keyword. Other web-heads suggest making your online correspondence faster with clear short-hand terms:

**IMHO**: in my humble opinion  
**WRT**: with respect to  
**CUL**: see you later  
**TIC**: tongue-in-cheek  
**OTDR**: on the other hand  
**ICW**: in other words  
**FWIW**: for what it's worth  
**TTYN**: as to for now



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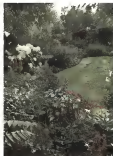
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## Flower Power

### Springtime in maple leaf gardens

Last week marked the start of spring, when thoughts turn to... gardening. *Dave and Cathy Cosentino, a retired couple living in Danville, Ont., have won many awards and last year published their first book, The Rusty Rule Gardener: Beautiful Canadian Gardens with Minimum Tool. Cathy Cosentino spoke to Senior Writer Darcy Jacob.*

There's less you can do before warm weather arrives. You can cut away deadwood in shrubs and trees, but you shouldn't get carried away and start hacking things back or changing their shape. You should look at your garden when it's bare and decide what's going where. I keep a notebook and fill pages with ideas. It's always interesting to go back later and see what worked and what didn't. I get tremendous pleasure just sitting on a



Cosentino's garden: get rid of deadwood now

bench and admiring the physical beauty of our garden. Sometimes, I'll go out for 15 minutes, and be gone two hours. I forget everything—even what race it is.

## Overheard

### Hacks and fax

It's business as usual for **Jean Chrétien** and **Paul Martin**—recurring tensions continue over who leads the party into the next election. Martin is crying foul over what they say was a sophisticated—but failed—attempt to make them look bad. Last week, many reporters received anonymous faxes of a document that purported to be minutes of a conference call among Martin supporters plotting to oust the PM. The document was phony—and wasn't the first such effort to embarrass Martin.

Last year, *Saturday Night* magazine writer **Gay Lawson** was given what seemed to be "speaking notes" aimed at gauding Martin-ini through questions on the undeclared campaign to oust Chrétien. Lawson later said he had no reason to believe the memo genuine—but left that to readers to decide. Martin associates and the latter fake was clearly written by someone who knows the party well. But it went overboard, they say, with a suggestion MPs might lead a caucus meeting aimed at ousting the PM. Then, everyone agreed, it was up to Liberals would take—if they wanted a political farce.

John Gidder

## Overbites

"If I wanted to spear [Anahim Mighty Duck Paul Kariya], he doesn't get up... My stick got caught in his jersey."

—**Drayn Marchment** of the San Jose Sharks, describing incident that earned him three-game suspension

"I've seen a lot more severe and I've taken a lot worse."

—**Scott Thornton** of Dallas Stars after three-game suspension for swiping at head of San Jose Shark **Marco Sturm** with stick in hand

"I deserve to be suspended; it's ugly."

—**Scott Niedermayer** of New Jersey Devils, describing stick attack on Florida Panther **Peter Worrell** for 10-game suspension

"In any hockey game, you're going to get fights, but usually it's ceremonial. Swinging a stick and injuring a person is different."

—**Toronto police Sgt. Lorne Kozmik**, explaining assault charges after fight between officers in police league game



## Someone must be right

Three same-day newspaper reports on the same event: who says Canadian media outlets are all alike?



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## Overture

### PASSAGES

**Appealing:** The National Ballet of Canada will appeal an order by an independent arbitrator to retrospectively reinstate principal dancer Kimberly Glasson, then 38, who was fired in December, 1998, after 18 years' service; the suit for wrongful dismissal, breach of contract, conspiracy, slander and libel. The two sides agreed four months later to take the issue to arbitration.

**Honoured:** Former Tory cabinet minister Flora MacDonald, 75, was presented the Pearson Peace Medal for outstanding achievement in international service and understanding, by Gov. Gen. Adrienne Clarkson. MacDonald, whose career included trips as minister of external affairs and chairwoman of the Ottawa-based International Development Research Centre from 1992 to 1997, also ran for the Conservative leadership, against Joe Clark, in 1976.

**Arrested:** Jaalid Abdallah Al-Ansari, 56, better known in his 1960s black militant days as **El Rap Brown**, was arrested in Alabama on charges of killing a Georgia sheriff's deputy and wounding another officer in a shootout. Al-Ansari was already wanted by authorities on charges of theft for receiving stolen property and impersonating an officer.

**Honoured:** World-champion kayaker Caroline Brunet, 31, of Lac Beauport, Que., was named female athlete of 1999 at the Canadian Sport Awards. Other award winners included North Vancouver diver **Blythe Hartley**, 17, top junior female, **Alexandre Despatie**, 14, of Laval, Que., junior male, and Daniel Igliński, top male (page 52).

**Died:** Michael Sauer, 89, was the first Canadian cabinet minister of Ukrainian



descent. A former mayor of Oshawa, Ont., he served as labour minister under **John Diefenbaker** when the Conservatives were elected in 1957 and remained in the position until their defeat in 1963. He ran for the leadership in 1967, receiving 45 votes, and served as party House leader until he lost his seat to Ed Broadbent in the 1968 election. He died of heart problems, in Oshawa.

**Died:** Ronald Whidden Ganong, 83, was patriarch of the famed Ganong Bros. Ltd. cheese company of St. Stephen, N.B. In 1957, he became president of the company, which was founded in 1873, and ran it for the next two decades. A Second World War veteran and Order of Canada recipient, he was elected the first chairman of the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council in 1954, and also served with a variety of business groups. He died of pneumonia, in St. Stephen.

**Retired:** Former Montreal Expo and celebrated hair-maker **Tim Raine**, 40, retired from the New York Yankees. Raine, who has been battling lupus, had his last years with the Expos from 1979 to 1990.

**Hired:** Impresario **Gersh Drabinsky**, 50, former chairman of Livent Inc., was named a creative marketing consultant for the **National Post**. Toronto-based Livent filed for bankruptcy protection in the United States and Canada in 1998. Drabinsky and his Livent partner, **Myron Guthe**, face criminal and civil legal actions over allegations of a \$100-million fraud. In response to Drabinsky's appointment, the Post's ad agency, Holmes & Lee, resigned, citing "extreme deficiencies" with him in advertising matters.

**Wore:** Flamboyant former Dallas Cowboys linebacker **Thomas (Hollywood) Henderson** stands to collect \$42 million from a winning Texas lottery ticket. Said Henderson, 47, who retired in 1979, "I'm going to continue to do the charities that I do, take care of my children and buy my means a Town Car."

## Tips for a Better Healthstyle

From  
Hil Johnson & Joanne McLeod's  
best-selling book, *Body Break—  
Our Guide to Healthy Living*.

### Exercise Tips

- 1 Start by developing a reasonable level of aerobic fitness. Exercise 3 to 4 times per week for 25 to 40 minutes at moderate intensity.
- 2 Gradually increase the exercise duration to 50 to 60 minutes at least 3 to 5 days per week and raise the intensity as high as you safely can.
- 3 Include strength training twice a week. Muscle is denser than fat, takes up less room, and burns fat and calories.
- 4 You are more likely to stick with a program if you don't consider it tedium. Find an activity that works for you. Keep fit and have fun.



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Peter C. Newman

## Martin rethinks the mergers

It's the ultimate irony of Canadian politics that the duo of scorpions now facing off for leadership of the Liberal party need each other almost as much as they despise each other.

John Charest, 46, has little chance of being returned to power for a third term unless he can convince, in 2001 with Paul Martin, his most capable minister, at his side. At the same time, the 61-year-old finance minister can't appear to be nixing the ongoing power struggle out to pursue without alienating Charest's still-powerful allies within the Liberal party.

Martin's impatience has deep personal roots. He is haunted by his father's record of running for the Liberal party's top job three times—in 1948, 1958 and 1968—and missing the crown each time. His son's current frustration is fuelled not only by his ambivalence but by his confidence that he understands the challenges facing this country far better than the incumbent prime minister. And that he thus stands a far better chance of extending the Liberal mandate.

Just before the recent Liberal convention, Martin talked to me at length about how today's new economy requires a new politics. Canada, he believes, has entered a kind of *shovel* state. Instead of being haunted by the past, dissolving the past and acquiring nervously in the future, Canadians are more at ease with their status and their prospects. Instead of being afraid of globalization, they are embracing it with technology. "What I'm finding," he said, "is that even the new economy's smallest start-up companies have to go from concept, to financing, to market and to global distribution very quickly. You can't move forward incrementally anymore. We must have the infrastructure in this country that enables this to happen efficiently, and that's the direction governments have to move."

The finance minister supported me by citing as a prime example of the required shift, the desirability of merging Canada's banks. "The turnaround of the bank mergers," he told me, "was in no way a rejection of the concept that Canadian banks must become major North American, indeed world, players. That has to be the ultimate goal. The issue was that the mergers couldn't take place at the expense of discriminating domestic competition, because the only alternative to competition is excessive regulation—and I certainly don't believe in that. We wanted to make sure that banking services will be provided in rural parts of this country and that small and medium-size business have access to as much competition for their services as possible. We want the banks to be as big and as international as they can be, but we have to find a way that can be done without destroying domestic competition." Martin believes this can be done and

will be announcing new regulations to that effect in April.

He describes his recent budget's aim as modernizing government by enhancing opportunities for the high-tech revolution's leading-edge entrepreneurs. "What Scott Pearson has done at Northern Securities is the classic example of what I'm driving at," he told me. "There is no doubt in my mind that Canada is incredibly well positioned when you see what a young fellow like Pearson has done—or Larry Ager in another area, or John Roth at Nortel, one of the hottest companies going. We must duplicate these three people, time and time again, because they understand where the world is going and have a sustaining interest in public policy by creating a realistic agenda for the future."

"This year's budget," he continued, "is the first of the 21st century, and OK, if we're going to make it, this is what we have to do. Of course we must focus on education and health care, but a part of my job-budget work, I visited a highly successful company called Research In Motion, in Kitchener. What struck me was that the owners argued very fervently that they're going to stay in Kitchener, expand the size of their plant, and that the single most important factor in that company's development was the proximity of the University of Waterloo. That's the kind of situation we wanted to focus on in the budget. What's important for us is that the head office be here, that the driving force of the New Economy remain in Canada."

It's a difficult assignment because, at some point, politicians are tempted to create incentives for the people making extraordinary efforts by placing them in a more favourable tax situation than others. "Sure we have to recognize our expensive possessions," Martin believes, "but if you don't retain fairness as your main ingredients, you won't have the public's support."

Martin's most imaginative take is on the future of the new economy. "There is a tendency to think that the only thing that we have to do now is pay down the debt and cut costs," he says. "But that's only part of it. What's really required is a fundamental structural shift. I'm talking about a cultural transformation that has a lot to do with changing concepts of risk, and understanding how you finance and develop the new paradigm. That's essentially a private-sector issue but government is an important part of that compromise. Governments must drastically alter their architecture, because we're the last institution that hasn't gone international. We must also figure out how the world can go global so that markets work for people and not only a small, privileged few."

Though they are separated by only five years in age, Paul Martin is tomorrow's man, just as much as Jean Charest is yesterday's.



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# PASSPORTS FOR SALE

Sophisticated forgeries are fuelling a tidal wave of global migration

By John Nicol in Bangkok

His diamond-encrusted watch glowers in the open the steel-blue BMW's dashboard a nightmare tour of *As Bangkok*. "Those two hotels are where you find the Russian and Uzbekistan prostitutes," says the man known to international police and immigration authorities only as Zeeva. "The Iranian hang out here. They're into kidnapping the children of rich Iranians and holding them ransom." At the Grand Hotel, he goes on, pointing to the left, "many criminals meet after midnight in the basement lounge. It's like the United Nations." His ultimate destination is a KFC at one end of Porporo, a notorious street of bar girls, prostitution, stolen watches and designer knock-offs, and underage prostitutes selling favours to tourists. "This place scares me," says Zeeva in a heavy Sri Lankan accent. "There's too many guns and drugs about."

Zeeva need not worry unduly. Slight, well-tanned and with a graceful smile, he is a fixture at Bangkok's shadier streets, a "big man" to his



Bangkok's sailors turned back at the airport in Hong Kong carrying papers for a non-existent boat in Vancouver harbour

countrymen because of what he does: smuggle humans to some of the world's most favored locations with fake documents that fool even the most sophisticated security systems. "When the BMW pulls up at the restaurant, a Japanese security guard rushes to open the door. After four postponements and numerous calls on his cell phone, Zeeva has agreed to meet a Canadian journalist to tell his story. It is a story of almost casual intrigue: he estimates that by securing fake travel documents and other ID—his particular expertise is fabricating French papers—he has smuggled 700 to 800 of his fellow Tamils into Europe. "Newer to Canada," insists the 35-year-old, though that is not the view of Canadian authorities who have him on their wanted list.

One reason for his work is simple: "We have problems in our country. We have to leave." The persecuted Sri Lankan civil war doesn't attract the attention of the world's media as did Bosnia or Kosovo, he complains. "There are 80 million Tamils in the world with no homeland. Nobody speaks up for us." So Zeeva does his part by helping to relocate Tamil

Tamils to a more developed country after their fighting days are over. Even though some of his countrymen and a Canadian were jailed last year for smuggling Tamils to Canada, Zeeva is not deterred. His work goes on. But "for a price," he adds. "Always for a price."

Hang out in the tight circles in Bangkok, and anything can be bought, including a new identity. Thailand's capital has become the global centre for producing fake passports to facilitate an estimated \$10-billion annual trade in people smuggling. Within two days, price shops can produce passports from almost any nation in the world, Zeeva told *Maclean's*. A forged Canadian passport can be bought on Khao San Road, the backpackers' haven in Bangkok, for \$1,500. The forgeries are so exact that Canadian passport and immigration officials believe they are largely powerless to detect those who are trying to fake their way into Canada. Powerless, too, to protect the integrity of a document that was, not long ago, almost the epitome of fair play in international travel.

Just before Christmas, alleged terrorist Ahmed Razaev,



## 'It's like drinking during Prohibition. If people want to go to a Western country, they'll find some way to do it.'

who arrived in Canada on a fake French passport, showed up at the Washington state border with a fraudulently acquired Canadian one and enough bomb-making equipment to destroy three jetliners. But Rouss and other like him are only the high-profile up of the iceberg in the increasingly routine game of aquiring people around the globe with a heavy array of false documentation—everything from phoney diplomatic passports to re-created hunting licenses to back up a cover story.

Terrorist and stowaways arriving on smuggling ships garnet the headlines, but the vast majority of illegal immigrants show up in Canada across the U.S. border on irregularly scheduled airplanes. They are the world's economic migrants, people from almost every country imaginable with a dream to better their lives or at least taste what the Western world has to offer. And their numbers are rising.

In 1993, the total of in-Canada refugee claimants rose by 20 per cent to 30,390—the highest figure since 1991. Some of these are legitimate refugees, winning their way here from countries torn by religious or ethnic strife. An increasing number are the queue-jumpers, coming primarily for economic reasons. They are the ones fueling the boom in counterfeit documents. They are the ones for whom Canada's Passport Office has created more than 20,000 files dealing passport abuse.

People smuggling, of course, involves more than just a phony ID, no matter how convincing. At its highest level, it is a cat-and-mouse game in which smugglers go out of their way to teach their clients to act like someone who might own the passport they are carrying. That cuts meat lessons in history, geography and current events, as well as positing if clients are refused boarding, they are taught to be as careenous as possible, and to threaten to sue. In the United States recently, immigration officers sent back Chinese queue-jumpers who had dyed their hair vibrant colours and wore out-

landish clothes, presumably on the notion that drawing attention to themselves would suggest they had nothing to hide.

Caryl Aycart sits in the 14th-floor Canadian Consulate, gazing out at the bustle of Hong Kong's Victoria harbour, where the latest scam has been the smuggling of young Chinese from Fujian province in the steel boxes on container ships. In almost three years in Hong Kong, the busiest Asian embarkation point for Canada, she has seen almost every gambit to jump the queue. For her, the answer is rill the best weapon to detect frauds. "I play the Canadian quiz show," says Aycart, a former Torontonian who has worked in immigration intelligence for 12 years. "If they say they live in Montreal, I'll see if they recognize any French. They memorize the name of the local hockey team. But I try to ask questions that someone hasn't thought of in alien-smuggling school. When I loaded one passenger who didn't know what to say when I asked, 'Do you pay taxes?' the smuggler reach the next wave to say, 'Yes, every April, I pay taxes.'"

In Aycart's case, the sleuthing is played out against Hong Kong's cavernous new \$10-billion glass-and-steel airport at Chek Lap Kok, a facility that transports 500,000 passengers to Canada each year. One day last month, she turned back five Bangladeshi seamen trying to meet a non-content ship in Vancouver harbour. It's a common scam, also used by Russians and Ukrainians, that is usually exposed with one call to a Canadian port authority. Intelligence reports say other migrants who tried the scheme admitted to paying up to \$6,000 for the covering letter and counterfeit seamen's books, which are sometimes full of spelling mistakes.

In Thailand, Brian Crocker has seen the smugglers adjust. "Every time a country comes up with a new passport security feature, counterfeiters may take five months or so, but they'll find some way to get around it," says Crocker. Canada's Bangkok-based immigration control officer. Airlines are heavily fined for allowing improperly documented travellers to board—paying that cost along to their regular customers. And the Canadian taxpayer must foot an estimated \$50,000 cost for each detainee. But the cost of obtaining forgeries has undermined the passport as a document of record. "It's like stopping people from drinking during Prohibition," says Crocker, a 40-year-old from Corner Brook, Nfld. "If they want to go to a Western country, they'll find some way to do it."

Of course, scam passports vary dramatically in quality



*Alleged launder house: boat people arriving last summer on Vancouver Island (left). Illegal migration has become an almost daily occurrence for developed countries*

On one end is a waxy version of a Canadian passport, which reads of quality, and can be ordered through ads in *Soldier of Fortune* magazine, as well as through certain shady travel agencies spraddled throughout the Far East, according to Citizenship and Immigration on Canada's intelligence reports, which Montreal has obtained. On the other is the high-quality knockoff that has made Bangkok the international centre for forged documents of all types. The reason: law and opportunity.

Zarva says that when he arrived in Thailand nine years ago, most of the underworld was making money off the drug trade. Now, everyone he knows who used to transport drugs has switched to transporting humans. That's because the country's reformed law enforcement agencies can often be bribed, and the penalties—especially when compared with drugs—are negligible: the maximum fine for possessing false papers is \$6000 bail, or \$120. Is

*Canada's Immigration officials sometimes are harassed by crude attempts to trick them. Some scum from the border*

• **Wearing blue trousers and white hats, eight men claiming to be members of the Palestinian navy marched into Bangkok airport with**

an "official letter" saying they were being sent on a vacation to Research, with an initial stop in Canada, because of the "excellent service" they had given. Told their story was not credible, they made a hasty dash, marched out of the airport and were never heard from again.

Canada, the penalty for using or forging a phoney passport can be 14 years, but the most common sentence has been a \$500 fine, if anything. A refugee claim can override the law. Defence lawyers argue the drawing card defence: that a claimant had to do whatever was necessary to avoid persecution.

In the electronic age, it should be easy to verify a passport's validity by simply running its identification number through a computer. But countries have balked at creating a common database that airlines can use, too easy to abuse, most say. Canada's solution has been to deploy immigration control officers (ICO's) in 26 countries to reach airlines back to identify passengers with improper documentation. It is not a job for the faint-hearted.

Crocker says he has received eight death threats during his three-year posting in Bangkok, six from Chinese gangs. "One guy told me I better be extremely careful what I do,"

## A FEW WAYS NOT TO GAIN ENTRY TO CANADA

- **One Angolan presented his own version of a Canadian visa—with a large map of Canada in dark burgundy alongside a British coat of arms.**
- **Some women carrying fake passports wear the same clothes, earrings and necklaces of the people in the photo—even though the**
- passports were four years old.
- **A Sri Lankan woman claimed she was the wife of the man she was travelling with, but when an official asked that her nose and cheeks were different from the passport photo, the man responded. "After we got married, her nose grew and her cheeks fell."**

said Crocker, his down-home lik comports with the chirping cicadas above a no-frills Bangkok restaurant. "He said, 'Give me back our passports and tickets, because bullets in Bangkok are extremely cheap, and so is your life.'" The threat was believable: Crocker estimates the smuggler's cargo of 10 Chinese migrants was worth more than half a million dollars. In the lucrative movement of citizens from the People's Republic of China, gangs charge between \$22,000 and \$75,000 per head—and have even killed their own agents for failing to deliver people to the right destination.

Bangkok became an international centre for counterfeiting when Chinese gangs moved in during the mid-1990s, as China rejected the offer of Hong Kong, say local po-



for the Canadian passport—the same laminates that are easily obtained in Bangkok, says Zerva.

**If Bangkok** is the world's phoney passport capital, Hong Kong International Airport is the scene of the most daring scam to enter Canada illegally—the boarding-pass switch.

It works like this: Passenger A, who wants to go to Canada but has no visa will buy a ticket on, say, Kuala Lumpur, while Passenger B, who has a visa but no intention of going to Canada, buys a ticket to Vancouver. In the airport departure lounge, in a restaurant table or in a washroom, the passengers switch boarding passes. Passenger A flies to Vancouver and applies for refugee status, describing his phoney documents on route. Passenger B catches in the ticket to Kuala Lumpur. For the longest time, this play was a thorn in the side of the

Crocker in Bangkok, right, died shortly after his three-year posting.

airline until Jean-Paul Delisle, Canada's former IGO in Hong Kong, came up with a better mouse-trap. The Ottawa-born Delisle, 51, established his own document security company to process airline passengers. Using infrared detectors to scan key documents, and a team of security officers, he checks out every passenger boarding an Air Canada flight in the Hong Kong departure lounge. By doing that within the one-hour window before departure, his group has allowed only two improperly documented passengers to slip aboard Air Canada flights to Canada in the past 11 months.

Delisle's services are not cheap. But he argues that his fee, \$250 to \$300 a flight, save the airlines more than they would pay in fines for transporting illegal passengers. Canada charges a riding fee, depending on how good the airline is at stopping illegal migrants, but the highest rate is \$5,000 and could mean paying per diem charges if refugees are held in detention. France and Australia also fine airlines about \$2,500 plus per diem costs. An illegal Iranian immigrant who waged an unsuccessful two-year fight to stay in Australia ended up costing Cathay Pacific Airways close to \$100,000.

Tracking down the bogus traveller in a busy international airport is not an easy game. Against him she has been steeled by the sophisticated forgers of Ontario driver's licenses and hospital insurance cards she has confiscated in Hong Kong. She detected one Chinese national with a fraudulent



Canadian passport and a doctored driver's license only because the same photos were used—with the image reversed.

A new weapon in tracking the movement of fake passports has been lost: that alone authorized to intercept the mail of suspected smugglers. The Netherlands picked off a package of 10 counterfeit Canadian passports and passport laminates being sent from India to a Sri Lankan in The Hague that way. That customs has seized 72 improper passports in the mail, primarily the visa-exempt passports of certain European countries as well as of Japan and Korea. Toronto-based RCMP and Immigration Canada officials recently intercepted 12 packages of Iranian-Canadian documents on their way to Dubai.

These packages, which include passports and social insurance cards, credit cards, library ID and fishing licenses, are often passed on by members of a particular community trying to help people from their homeland to immigrate, says Brian O'Connell, an immigration intelligence officer based near the Toronto airport. Some new Canadians will tear out their passports and documentation to help friends and relatives arrive; some are expected to hand over the valued landed-immigrant papers known as IMM 1060s so they can be altered and included in someone else's passport. Easily available chemicals can wash the

## Here at home, the good forgeries are made in Montreal, the smugglers are based in Toronto

lice washrooms. Counterfeiting initially focused on fake credit cards and bogus American money. The production of passports became an essential part of the documentation needed to use the credit cards and to cash stolen traveller's cheques. Now, with the surge in Third World migrants seeking a better life in Canada and the United States, the fake passport trade has taken on a life of its own. Gang-employed artists copy stolen models or peel back laminates on a passport's vinyl page to create a new identity. It has become so commonplace that this "seamstress" sew up the new passports for as little as \$4 apiece.

In Canada, the good forgeries are made in Montreal, and most of the smugglers are based in Toronto, says Bob Dixon, an RCMP investigator in the immigration and passport section anti-smuggling arm in Milton, Ont. "Why that is, we don't know." In a raid in Montreal in late 1998, RCMP officers upset Russian and Asian members by seizing hundreds of bogus passports from different countries. Also in the earlier Canadian visa, citizenship cards and immigration forms. In other raids in Montreal, the RCMP has discovered the specialized plastic laminates

## How Immigration is fighting back

Later this week, Immigration Minister Elton Callin is expected to introduce a new law to crack down on illegal migrants. The bill will include increased funding for overseas efforts to stop the movement and tougher penalties for people assisting, say Immigration Canada insiders. But these are only the first steps in Canada's attempts to counter the surge in human smuggling.

Madeira has learned that the new Canadian passport, due out later this year, will have the photo embedded in the plastic laminate on the main page. Jocelyn Francoeur, director of security, policy and enforcement at the passport office, would not discuss details, but he said the new security features will stop "basement" artists from coming out with credible counterfeit versions.

Companies specializing in the latest tricks to identify people by their fingers, hands, eyes and can have approached the passport office about including such security methods in the new passport, but Francoeur said they would have been useless without other countries following suit. "Member states of the International Civil Aviation Organization haven't chosen a particular technology or preferred biometric," says Francoeur. He believes the best non-invasive way of identifying someone is still with a picture, adding that the British, Germans and Americans are all concentrating on making the photos tamperproof, and

will be releasing new passports without so-called biometric data.

One big glitch is that the passport of the world's most populated country—the People's Republic of China—has few security features, yet many of its citizens want to move to North America. There has been a slight drop-off in the number of Chinese illegal migrants so far this year, notes Greg Lethbridge, an immigration intelligence officer in Ottawa. That's because Canada has worked with French police to stop a Chinese ring that was using Paris as a launching pad, also because Operation Foresight, a multinational November sting operation at nine airports in Asia, sent a message to smugglers. But it's a message that will likely deter them only for a short while.

John Nicks

**'Life is perceived to be better in the West. It's peer pressure. To not go is a loss of face.'**

typing from immigration papers, so new names and vital statistics can be entered.

Anyone unsearched one smuggling ring last year that enticed 42 young Asian-Canadian to come to Hong Kong on an all-expenses-paid trip, "lost" their passport and then re-apply for one at the Canadian Consulate.

"One after another they would come to the consulate and say, 'I was over in a bar in Wan Chai, and I lost my passport, lost my ticket, lost everything.' They were supposed to get \$10,000, but they lost their passport, their ticket and they were left with nothing. They didn't realize they had got involved with an organized crime syndicate."

**For all the pitfalls,** the illegal refugees will keep coming. The reason is simple: the illegal route is much quicker than the legitimate way to emigrate. "If they go through normal channels, they might not qualify," says the RCMP's Dixon. Acceptance is based on a point system that includes an individual's health, education and language abilities. But if, instead, they go to a smuggler to get in with false documentation, says Dixon, then they can make a refugee claim and spend a year or two trying to justify it. "If you come up with a believable story, and there are lots of lawyers around to help you do that, then you get accepted. If you don't, the bulk of them just disappear underground anyway."

For example, of the 599 Chinese who arrived by boat last summer on British Columbia's coast, 131 have been released from detention and 80 of them have disappeared.

China is the current flash point and the motivation is age-old and economic. "Life is perceived to be better in the West," says Agent in Hong Kong. "It becomes very difficult to be in a village in Fujian where someone's son has gone off to New York and sends money back, and now your neighbors have fridges and stoves and TVs, and you don't. You have a son in the rice paddies. You tell him to go to New York. It becomes very much a peer-pressure one-upmanship with the neighbours. To not go is



Agent in Hong Kong: tripping up queue-jumpers with Canadians

a loss of face to the family." But an internal government report dated Feb. 17, recently obtained by Reform party immigration critic Leon Bessie, said the process of buying one's way into Canada is rampant at Canadian missions around the world. The report identifies 304 cases in Canada and at overseas missions of employee "malfeasance" in the immigration process. Most of the incidents involved locally hired staff in Canadian consulates abroad and 32 required police involvement.

Hong Kong is one jurisdiction that takes the possession of false documents seriously, imposing a maximum penalty of 14 years in jail and a fine of up to \$19,000. In Canada, "judges feel it is a victimless crime," says Jocelyn Francœur, director of security, policy and enforcement at the passport office. "And the costs of importing witnesses from every island airport in the world is prohibitive." As a result, the passport office simply denies new documents or revokes them for up to five years to those who "misuse" their passport.

## COMING TO CANADA

The largest groups of refugee claimants in Canada, by country of origin, from Jan. 1 to March 23\*:

Pakistan	559
Sri Lanka	481
China	469
Hungary	355
India	213
Mexico	227
Cuba	226
Colombia	213
Brazil	186
Iran	144

\* Figures represent total number of refugee claimants, including and excluded.

## Canada

# A child's garden of dope

Vietnamese gangs make cultivating marijuana a family affair

**RCMP Cpl. Brian MacDonald** encountered the newest casualties of British Columbia's war on illegal drugs as he smashed through the basement door of a suburban Burnaby home, gun in hand. A three-year-old Asian girl stared back at him in wide-eyed terror. Only after he searched the room for armed assailants or booby-traps would the vicious drug investigator kneel to console the child, and await the arrival of social workers. "It was frightening for me, too," recalls MacDonald. "We found another boy, same age" armed as the child, and await the arrival of social workers. "It was frightening for me, too," recalls MacDonald. "We found another boy, same age" armed as the child, and await the arrival of social workers. "It was frightening for me, too," recalls MacDonald. "We found another boy, same age" armed as the child, and await the arrival of social workers.

In a two-day drug bust last month, RCMP and municipal police officers raided marijuana growing operations in 24 residential homes across the greater Vancouver region, with stunning results. They seized 31 adults and an estimated half million dollars' worth of marijuana plants. They also found 25 children between the ages of six months and 17 years, most of them Vietnamese. Since Feb. 1, a total of 40 children have been taken into protective care following raids on residential "grow-ups." Most were found involved in seizures, or to parents who had been released on bail.

The raids and the surprising number of children caught up in them confirm that the grow-op business "has changed radically," says the 42-year-old MacDonald. "It used to be a couple of guys, outdoor bikes, in a tiny old house." Now, it's a family affair, with the latest RCMP intelligence estimates putting the number of grow-ups in the Vancouver and Fraser Valley area at 7,700. Most of them are innocuous-looking homes occupied by families whose children play on the lawn, while marijuana blooms in the basement.

Vietnamese organized crime gangs began muscling in on Vancouver's marijuana networks in the mid-1990s, after realizing the huge potential of hydroponic production. Grown in heavily fertilized water under intense electric lighting, just one of the newest hybrids can produce one pound of marijuana—worth \$2,000 to \$3,000 to the grower—every 90 days, says

RCMP Sgt. Mike Dunbar of the regional drug enforcement branch.

The gangs recruit recently unimmigrated families from Vietnam to live in rental houses and tend the marijuana. The presence of children adds an air of innocence to the operation. But these children are often confronted with the violence that is a byproduct of the drug trade. And their living conditions can be a jumble of high-voltage wires and potentially toxic chemicals, observe Vancouver social worker Tim MacDonald.

The realization last year that Vietnamese crime syndicates were involved in the marijuana-growing business—and using the profits to buy U.S. cocaine and heroin—focused the Mounties' attention on grow-ups, say police sources. British Columbia has long had its home growers. But changes for marijuana cultivation jumped 52 per cent last year to 3,876 in the province, and this year's raid will almost certainly see police an even bigger crop of suspects.

The Mounties have tapped up an awareness campaign to help communities recognize the telltale signs of grow houses—including windows perma-

neously covered, visible condensation on doors and walls, a pungent greenhouse smell and unusual nighttime activity. The RCMP is also granting incentives to step up inspections on rental properties, which may be in their best interest: repairing houses damaged by grow operators, who massively alter plumbing, walls, heating and wiring, often exceeds \$50,000.



Grow, Phil brief with per provisions, house growers

As for the children, most of those removed so far have been in good health and well-cared. But with "hundreds and hundreds of ops to follow up," says the RCMP's MacDonald, "I don't know what we'll find." And with the province having to bring in social workers, anthropologists and homekeepers from across the southeast mainland just to deal with the more ethno, more police have to stretch the child-welfare system to its limits.

Ross Howard in Vancouver



## A Canadian rescue on the high seas

Two Sea King helicopters plucked 13 survivors from life rafts after a cargo ship sank in heavy seas 700 km north of Bermuda. The Sea Kings were from a flotilla of five Canadian warships that happened to be sailing south from Halifax for training exercises in the Caribbean. Zodiac boats were deployed from the ships as part of the search operations. Six bodies were retrieved.

## Pricking a finger for AIDS

Ottawa has approved an at-home blood test for the AIDS virus in which results are available in 15 minutes. The screening unit, an airtight plastic cartridge with a chemical that can analyze a prickle of blood, is approved for use only by certified health professionals, such as doctors, dentists and some therapists. Developed by BioChem

ImmunoSystems of Montreal, the kit reduces the current two-week wait for results. But AIDS activists say this in itself may pose a problem: the kits are said to be 99.92 per cent accurate, but false-positive HIV screening tests can also produce many falsely positive results. Consequently, activists say, some people may become unduly alarmed by the test, not realizing it is only a screening test that has to be confirmed. U.S. regulators have approved a home-use kit for HIV that costs about \$60.

## 'Urge to kill'

Michael Wayne McGreg, a 34-year-old drifter from Yarmouth, N.S., with a long and convoluted rap sheet, may turn out to be Canada's worst serial killer. McGreg, who pleaded guilty last week to the 1998 murder of a Niggin Cove, Nfld., woman and is serving life in prison, now says he has murdered 16 people in



McGreg calling

Canada and the United States because of what he says is an uncontrollable "urge to kill." Police in Moncton, N.B., Montreal, Halifax and Toronto are all investigating his claims. He is to be in court next month for the 1991 murder of two gay men in Montreal. According to the RCMP officer investigating his claims, McGreg is "well-mannered" and "articulate," and shows no remorse.

## A big week for big tobacco

Cigarette manufacturers enjoyed a rare run of good news last week. In the United States, the Supreme Court rejected President Bill Clinton's authority to ban tobacco marketing aimed at young people. In Canada, the B.C. Supreme Court issued out a section of the provincial government's ban on smoking in pubs, prisons and other public places, in second refusal to anti-smokers in a month. In Toronto, the du Maurier jazz festival was cancelled, then rescued with a renewed donation from Imperial Tobacco Ltd., du Maurier's parent. Tobacco firms are still required by federal law to spend up their 160-million ads and sports sponsorships over the next three years. And British Columbia is promising to reverse a law the court previously rejected to confirm the province's right to sue cigarette makers for health-care costs.

## Denies killing Reena Virk

Victoria teenager Kelly Ellard denied she was the one who fatally strangled and drowned 14-year-old Reena Virk in a group frenzy in 1997. Testifying in her own defence, Ellard, 17, admitted punching Virk, but said she was not the last person with her and denied bawling about the murder later, as a stream of Crown witnesses have testified.

## No to gay marriage

The federal Liberal government wants to amend its own bill granting pension and other rights to gay couples so as to specifically exclude the possibility of same-sex marriage. The terms marriage and spouse are to be limited to heterosexual couples, the new definition says Justice Minister Anne McLellan had earlier insisted these definitions were not necessary. She changed her mind after more than a dozen Liberals voted against the bill on second reading.

## Harris and handgun

Ontario Premier Mike Harris is pushing ahead with his campaign promise to expel any student who brings drugs, alcohol or weapons on to school property. But he says he has no problem with school libraries being open a manual on handguns, among other things, by the Ontario Federation of Anglers

and Hunters. School officials in large centres agree both ideas, they fear anti-music expulsions will drive them to law suits, and a handgun how-to book will give some kids the wrong idea.

## Drug-resistant TB

Toronto has been designated a 'World Health Organization hot spot' for multi-drug-resistant strains of tuberculosis. They now account for three per cent of the 450 to 500 new cases in the city each year, the Canadian average is 1.2 per cent, low by world standards. Drug-resistant TB requires extensive treatment costing up to \$900,000 per person.

## The patronage game

The age-old issue of government patronage reared its shaggy head in P.E.I. Conservative Premier Ian Bruce called a special election for April 17. Bruce, with a lead in the polls and enough money in the kitty to offer six cuts, has tried to reinvigorate the province's long-standing system of government patronage.

His Liberal and NDP opponents say the new rules are just an excuse to secure the jobs of well-placed Tories.

## Lost pups

Thinner than usual pack ice in the Gulf of St. Lawrence is preventing seals from Prince Edward Island and Quebec's Magdalen Islands from reaching the harp seal herds. The same thin ice, however, combined with a late winter storm, has also separated nursing pups from their mothers. As a result, both the annual hunt and the number of new seals are expected to be dramatically reduced this year.

## More for health and transit

Newfoundland is trying to use its share of wealth from offshore oil for a host of boating. The big winners in last week's budget, the province's health system, road in one overrun, and Labrador Inuit, rolling from a score of up to 100,000 people. The latest received \$23 million to help build roads, seven and houses in five remote communities.

## Musical torture

After being bombarded with syrupy music from groups like the Backstreet Boys, students occupying University of Toronto president Robert Preichard's office ended their 10-day protest. The students, who were demanding a ban on school merchandise named in Third World weekshops, said they had achieved their goal of publicizing the issue. The idea of musical punishment seems to be blowing in the wind. A Detroit judge sentenced a teenager who'd been playing his rap music too loud to two hours of Wayne Newton songs.

## Fraud case collapses

More than 60 charges of fraud against flamboyant Ottawa-area developer Jose Poon and a handful of associates have been dropped after the Crown acknowledged it did not disclose some evidence to the defence. Poon was a star in Ottawa political circles until his spectacular \$279-million bankruptcy in 1994. The RCMP had been probing his companies' finances for five years.

The glorious coastal freshwater food at Western Brook Pond.

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# A Papa Pilgrim's Progress



## John Paul II reaches out in a historic visit to the Holy Land

**The steps are halting**, his hands shake and his voice is frail. No wonder: He is 79 years old, has travelled more than one million kilometers, visited over 120 countries and preached to more people than any religious leader in history, even though he apparently suffers from Parkinson's disease. Yet throughout his pontificate, now in its 22nd year, Pope John Paul II had not set foot in the Holy Land, that rocky desert area from which flourished three of the world's great religions—Islam, Judaism and Christianity. Had not, then, this is, until last week. In a historic, six-day pilgrimage that took him to Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian-controlled territories, the pontiff finally visited some of the most sacred sites claimed by all three religions—the places where Jesus was born, baptized, crucified and rose from the dead, where Mohammed ascended into heaven and where the Jews have created a nation. And despite the conflicting appeals for his political blessing, John Paul never wavered from his forceful communal and humanitarian message for "peace and justice, not only for Israel, but for the whole region."

Deploying all his well-guessed political skills, the Pope managed to please more and offend fewer as he coped deftly with such issues as the future status of Jerusalem, the future of the Palestinians and the alleged



*The view from Mount Nebo (top); children waiting to receive papal communion at Amman (above); blessing the crowd at the same mass (opposite); 'With newfound openness towards one another, Christians and Jews together must make courageous efforts to remove all forms of prejudice'*



**'The Catholic Church is deeply saddened by the hatred, acts of persecution and displays of anti-Semitism directed against Jews by Christians'**



*Emotional reunion with Holocaust survivor Zahari, reminding the Eternal Flame of Yad Vashem (left): 'I don't know to this day how he saw me. To tell you the truth, I thought it was God himself who had shown up.'*

*Celebrating mass in Bethlehem's Manger Square: the largest one-week influx of visitors since Israel was created in 1948*

Visiting moral complexity in the Holocaust. After a relatively quiet one-day visit to Jordan, John Paul on March 21 slowly and deliberately walked across the tarmac at Ben-Gurion International Airport in Tel Aviv to be confronted with millennia-old issues as fresh as this day's sun. In his welcoming speech, Israeli President Ezer Weizman told the pontiff: "You are arriving this evening in Jerusalem, the capital of the state of Israel [and] the heart of the Jewish world."

The following day, as predominantly Muslim Bethlehem on the West Bank, it was the Palestinians' turn as John Paul reaffirmed the Vatican's two-decade-long support for their homeland. He also spoke passionately of Palestinian suffering. "Your tomorrow is before the eyes of the world," he declared. "And it has gone on too long."

Then less than 24 hours later, in speeches at the Yad Vashem Holocaust museum, the Pope stepped short of apologizing for the Vatican's failure, under Pius XII, to condemn the Nazi Holocaust, but proclaimed: "The Catholic Church is deeply saddened by the hatred, acts of persecution and displays of anti-Semitism directed against Jews by Christians." And so it

were throughout the holy pilgrimage as the Pope told Christians, Jews and Arabs enough of what they desperately wanted to hear from the leader of the world's one billion Catholics. "The Pope's very gesture of coming here marks a turning point for Jews and Christians," said Eli Zborowski, a Holocaust survivor who attended the ceremony at Yad Vashem.

Worn as the pilgrimage—John Paul announced his desire to visit the Holy Land in his first Christmas homily in 1978—the Pope's pilgrimage was, by any measure, a major event. The Israeli government mounted what one official, police Brigadier David Tzvi, described as the country's "largest, most complicated and most sophisticated" security initiative ever. Code-named "Operation Old Friend," it involved 18,000 police officers and 4,000 soldiers. The visit was also expected to produce a \$50-million windfall for airlines and tour operators, thanks to an estimated 60,000 Christian pilgrims arriving from some 71 countries—the largest one-week influx of visitors since the creation of Israel in 1948. And with 2,000 journalists covering the event, Israeli and Palestinian had an unprecedented opportunity to put their political



agendas before a worldwide audience.

The trip began in Amman, Jordan's capital, from where the pontiff visited nearby Mount Nebo, upon which the Bible says God showed Moses the Promised Land. (In fact, Jerusalem, 70 km away, is clearly visible from the 800-m mount.) While in the Israeli capital, John Paul visited Weizman's official residence, a symbolic recognition of a country that his predecessors tried to ignore. Equally rich in symbolism was a visit to Palestinian-controlled Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus where the red, black, green and white Palestinian flag flew next to the white and yellow flag of the Vatican over Manger Square. From there, Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat rounded the Pope through the nearby Deheish refugee camp, where nearly 10,000 Palestinians, whose families fled their homes in the 1948 war that led to Israel's independence, now live in less than a square



kilometre of crumbling squatter. "I greet each one of you," John Paul said, "and I hope and pray that my visit will bring some comfort in your continuing plight."

But even with all the political odds and currents that swirled around him, the Pope stuck to his message of interfaith harmony and reconciliation. "With new-found openness towards one another, Christians and Jews together must make courageous efforts to remove all forms of



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ALAN ALMOG, *film critic*  
for more information and links

World



Visiting the Deheishleh Palestinian refugee camp near Bethlehem: "Your torment is before the eyes of the world. And it has gone on too long."

prejudice," he said at the outset of his visit. And his displays of profound spirituality clearly had an impact. "I've never experienced anything like it," said Cecilie de Nadillac, 51, a secretary from Paris, after attending the papal mass in Bethlehem. "It's the way he looks at you, even in a crowd."

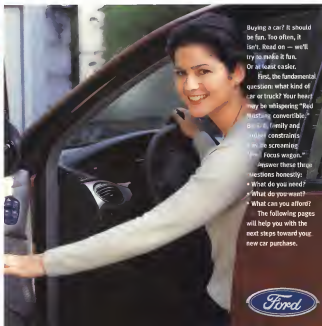
At Yad Vashem, he met 33 Holocaust survivors from his home town, Wlodowice in southern Poland, including Elzbieta Tazir. In January, 1945, after the liberation of the camp in which she had been interned, the then-14-year-old girl lay sick, starving and near death, but was carried three to four kilometers to safety by a young Polish priest named Kazimierz Wojtyla, the future John Paul II. Tazir sobbed convulsively at the reunion, and later said: "I don't know to this day how he saw me. To tell you the truth, I thought it was God himself who had shown up." And even though some Jewish leaders criticized his speech for not offering a formal apology for the Vatican's official silence during the Holocaust, others were deeply touched. "It was almost a prayer," said Rabbi Ron Krasnik, director of the Interreligious Coordinating Council of Israel. "I almost felt he was a modern prophet." The Pope concluded his history-

making visit in the same hectic fashion as it began—by packing in as many events as possible. In the largest, John Paul said mass before an estimated 100,000 people on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, where Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount, and on Sunday visited Jesus' boyhood town of Nazareth. Before his scheduled return to Rome on March 26, the well-but clearly exhausted pontiff was to have held separate bridge-building meetings with senior Jewish and Muslim clerics, and visited some of their holiest sites, the Dome of the Rock, where Mohammed began his heavenly ascent, and the Western Wall, the only part of the Second Temple to survive the sacking of Jerusalem by the Romans in AD 70. John Paul could not heal the wounds of centuries in a mere six days, but his courage and goodwill made an impression in a holy, though divided, land.

By Andy Jewish with Eric Silver in Jerusalem

# Women Take the Wheel

Canadian car expert JIM KENZIE tells you how to choose the car that's right for you.



Buying a car? It should be fun. Too often, it isn't. Read on — we'll try to make it fun. Or at least easier.

First, the fundamental question: what kind of car or truck? Your heart may be whispering "Red Mustang convertible," but a family and other constraints may be screaming "New Focus wagon."

Answer these three questions honestly:

- What do you need?
- What do you want?
- What can you afford?

The following pages will help you with the next steps toward your new car purchase.



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## Narrow the field

There are lots of great cars out there. Trying to evaluate them all is a full-time job — my job, actually. You can simplify the process if you pick three or four vehicles that meet your basic criteria and concentrate on them.

Start with basic research. Newsstands are full of monthly car magazines, both Canadian and American, most of which also publish annual new-car buying guides. Some of these publications are for car enthusiasts, some are more appropriate for the average car consumer. Most large daily newspapers have automotive pages or sections. And if you're a net surfer, every "portal" — Yahoo, Lycos, MSN — has an extensive auto section. Virtually every car has a Web site. There are dozens of independent sites, such as The Car Connection, with masses of reviews, driving tips, photos,

specifications and safety information. Sites of particular interest to women include [www.womenautoblog.com](http://www.womenautoblog.com), [www.williams.com/auto](http://www.williams.com/auto), [www.womenmagazine.com](http://www.womenmagazine.com), [www.womenmagazine.com/cars](http://www.womenmagazine.com/cars), and [www.womenmagazine.com/cars](http://www.womenmagazine.com/cars). A couple of hours with a good search engine should give you a huge head start in the sorting-out process.

## Financing

Entire books have been written on this subject! In a nutshell, it'll help if you know where you're going to get your financing before you go see-licking. Your choices include cash, a bank loan, financing from the dealership and leasing, each with or without a trade-in. Discussing these issues with a professional financial advisor first lets you focus on the cars when you enter the showroom.

## Visit the dealership

Women make up 51 percent of the population in Canada. So, why do some car companies and dealerships treat women like a "niche"? Women buy 20 percent of all new trucks, 40 percent of all new cars, and are a major influence in 80 percent of all new-vehicle acquisitions. Carry this knowledge with you confidently when you enter the showroom. You have the money. They have the car. They want — they need — your business. Make them earn it.

A new car or truck will likely be the second-biggest single purchase you ever make, next to a house. And many people spend more on vehicles over their lifetime than they do on a home. It makes sense to work with a professional salesperson whom you can trust to help you make this critical decision. Establishing a good working relationship with a sales associate may be the single most important step in this entire process.

If you visit the dealership with your father, husband, brother or male friend and the sales rep makes eye contact with you only when discussing colour, make it clear that the entire car — not just the paint and the upholstery — is for YOU.

You want the sales staff to be honest with you, be honest with them in return. Tell them what car you're interested in, whether it's a lease or purchase and if you have a trade-in. Show them you've done your homework, that you know the car and the market, and that you won't discuss a deal until you've completed your evaluation of the car and made your decision.



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fog lamps

car



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## Ford and Chatelaine are partners on the Web

Ford and Chatelaine have joined forces to present <http://chatelainewomen.chatelaine.com>, a Web site specifically aimed at women who are looking for relevant information to help them make confident and informed automotive decisions. Here, you can learn about an innovative new program coming soon to a Ford dealer near you. Car Smarts Interactive Seminars™ is a series of free no-obligation interactive seminars offering valuable information on vehicle maintenance, safety tips and financing alternatives — all in a trendy no-pressure environment.



expect more



## Showroom presentation

The sales rep has been taught to show you the car in a systematic way, to point out its features, highlight its advantages over the competition and counter any objections you may raise. Let her do her thing. Does she appear to know the product? Does she listen to your questions? Does she answer them frankly?

Check how easy it is to get in and out of the car. (Remember, you won't always be wearing pants!) For proper seating position, the more seat and steering wheel adjustments the better — especially if you are shorter, taller or wider than average. (The new Ford Taurus has adjustable pedals — if you're short, you're going to love them!)



Professional driving instructors, such as Young Drivers of Canada, suggest you should be able to put your right foot firmly on the floor under the brake pedal with your knee still slightly bent — this ensures that you'll have full braking power at all times.

When you hold the wheel at the 9 o'clock to 3 o'clock position — your hands at the 9 o'clock and 3 o'clock positions — your

elbows should be bent more than 90 degrees, but not completely straight. In fact, you should be able to grasp the top of the steering wheel with either hand, while keeping your elbow bent and your shoulders still against the seat back. This helps ensure that your hands won't slip off the wheel in a vigorous steering manoeuvre.

Check visibility to the front, sides



## Ford's Women Sales Associates Initiative

Women are a powerful force when it comes to buying new vehicles. Doesn't it seem strange that they're almost invisible on the selling side of these transactions? It did to Ford of Canada, who decided to do something about it. A pilot program involving 21 southern Ontario dealerships began with the insertion of ads in local newspapers seeking female applicants for careers in automotive sales. More than 500 inquiries led to 130 interviews and 36 successful new hires — six more than the original objective. Six months into the program, more than 80 percent of these women are still in their new career — well above the industry average of less than 50 percent. Ford will roll out the program nationwide this year.

and rear. Would you feel comfortable backing the car into a tight parking spot? Make sure you can see all the instruments. Work all the knobs, levers and buttons, even while wearing gloves — it's been known to get cold in this country!

You can't really tell about comfort until you've been in the car for a few hours. But you can check that the seat cushions fit your back and that the sides of the seat hold you snugly.

There NEVER seems to be enough storage space in a car, but look for places for your purse, briefcase, maps, sunglasses, pens, your cell phone (and that's not in your hand while you're driving, we hope).

When it comes to the trunk, size matters. But so does its shape (especially if you're a golfer) and the height of the sill you don't want to turn your back into a pretzel when stacking the groceries.



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\*Based on NHTSA's New Car Safety Ratings.

Women Take the Wheel — Advertising Feature



## Test drive

A surprising number of people settle for a "test sit" in the showroom. Bad idea. Drive the car! If you qualify for a company car, your shopping process may be no more involved than checking a box on a list handed to you by your fleet manager. Bad idea. Drive the car!

Plan more than a trip around the

bumps feel in your current car — how do they feel in THIS one?

Some drivers like a soft cushy ride, others prefer a firmer, more controlled feel. Some like steering that's sharp and quick, others prefer it easy and relaxed. Some drivers feel the need for speed, others prefer a laid-back, fuel-conscious cruise. You are buying this car for you. Make sure it feels right.

## A few test-driving tips:

1. You don't do zero-to-10-kilometre-per-hour drag-racing burnouts from every stoplight. See how the car reacts on "part throttle," when you depress the gas pedal partway down.
2. Find a bit of wide deserted road. At a moderate speed — say, 40 kilometres per hour — try steering the car from side to side, like a skier in a slalom. This is a reasonable simulation of what might happen if you ever had to swerve to avoid an emergency. Is the steering precise, smooth, direct? Does the car corner flat? Does it maintain its composure? Does it allow you to maintain your composure?
3. Most cars today have automatic transmission. Does the transmission shift smoothly? When you stomp on the gas to pass, does it change to a lower gear quickly?
4. If it's a manual transmission, can you move the lever without undue effort? Is each gear slot easy to find? How about reverse? (Some cars make this harder than it needs to be.) Can you engage the clutch easily? A heavy clutch plus heavy traffic is a leg-numbing combination.
5. Try the brakes: easy to begin with, then harder. (Don't try this without checking behind you first!) Does the car stop confidently? Are the brakes smooth, strong and linear (i.e., the harder you push, the faster you stop)? Or are they grabby, twitchy, over-sensitive? Do you need thighs of steel to get maximum braking?
6. Everybody likes a quiet car. However, there is noise — and there is noise. A low, mellow exhaust note is music to some people's ears. How does this car sound to you at full acceleration and in cruise mode? Check it out at the highway speeds you usually maintain. Can you still hear that CD? OK, now shut off the CD. Check for wind noise, road noise (call it "the sizzle" and the sales rep will be impressed) and the sound of stones and grit flying up under the wheel wells. Is the noise tolerable?



## Safety and security

All new cars sold in Canada must pass certain mandated crash standards. Some survive even more stringent tests, like the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety offset barrier test or the U.S. federal government's New Car Assessment Program (NCAP) test.

New-generation air bags deploy less forcefully, which may reduce injuries to child passengers and smaller drivers who sit nearer the wheel. Some bags even have multiple levels of deployment, depending on the severity of the crash.



Some cars also have rear-seat air bags, side air bags or other "inflatable devices" designed to protect your head and chest. You might as well get every advantage you can afford.

But your car's primary restraint system is the seat belt. Wear it. All the time. Adjust it properly: adjustable shoulder-belt mounts make this easier, especially for shorter people. Insist that everybody in the car wears their belt too.

Ideally, children should be in the rear seat. They must be secured by restraint systems appropriate for their

height and weight, not only their age. Make sure the child's safety seat is properly installed. Many (maybe most) are not. Study the installation instructions and your car's owner's manual carefully, and don't take shortcuts.

## Don't be a crash-test dummy

Our cars are safer than ever. Our roads are safer than ever. But drivers haven't changed, and the No. 1 safety system in a car is still the driver. A few refresher lessons might be the best single safety investment you will ever make. And the knowledge you gain is transferable to any car you buy, rent or borrow.

Safety and security are also about ensuring that when you park, your car and its contents will be where you left them when you return. Modern, stronger door locks discourage jockeying, as do anti-theft systems that disable the engine if a bad guy tries to jumpstart the car without the proper key.

A remote unlocking feature in the key fob means no fumbling for a key in a lonely parking lot.



## Young Drivers of Canada

Ford of Canada recently made a bold statement about the importance of driver training by purchasing the best-known name in the business, Young Drivers of Canada. The internationally recognized franchise system has trained both of my "young drivers," and my two younger ones will reap the same benefits when their time comes. The company trains more than "young" drivers: its "Collision Free" courses provide a perfect opportunity for drivers of all ages to brush up on their skills — or perhaps learn new ones. More details are available at Young Drivers locations throughout Canada or at your local Ford dealership.

Many remotes also illuminate the mirror of the car when they are activated. Once you're inside, one touch of a button locks all the doors.

However, no one has developed a cost-effective device against a break through the side window, so don't leave cell phones, purses, cameras or other easily stolen articles in their tempting view. Lock them in the glove box or trunk or hide them under the seat.

## Signing on the dotted line

A car is one of the biggest purchases most people make in their lives. No wonder we suggest you take this process seriously. But once you've committed yourself, don't look back — love the choice you've made. Care for your new car or truck. Wash it. Wax it. Get it serviced by the best. Treat it like your best friend. With a little luck, you should enjoy a long meaningful relationship.

See below for a freelance automotive writer and broadcaster, an editorial development manager and a consultant and speaker to business and government on automotive safety and fleet management.

## Extending an olive branch

Taiwan's newly elected Democratic Progressive president made a conciliatory gesture aimed at easing tensions with mainland China by allowing, for the first time, limited trade, transport and postal links between the two countries. Friction escalated after Taiwanese voters elected Chen Shui-bian, who, in the past, advocated independence in the face of Chinese claims to the island.

## Paying for Nazi slave labour

Germany approved draft legislation that provides \$6 billion in payments to Nazis' forced labourers, despite complaints from some historians that the average \$3,700 payout is inadequate. The compensation package will be jointly financed by Germany and companies that used unpaid labourers during the Second World War.

## Clinton calls for peace

President Bill Clinton spent five days in India, a visit sandwiched between one-day trips to Bangladesh and Pakistan, in an attempt to defuse the political situation on the subcontinent. Clinton's call for India and Pakistan to disarm their nuclear weapons came amidst ongoing tensions over the disputed Indian province of Kashmir, where 35 Sikhs were massacred on the eve of his visit.

## Harassment in a space capsule

Quebec nurse Judith Lapierre emerged from 110 days in a mock space capsule in Moscow complaining of a drunken New Year's Eve brawl between two other Russian crew members and unwanted sexual advances from another. "When I don't want to be kissed," said Lapierre, a married 32-year-old who was the only female among the eight-member crew, "I don't want to be kissed."

## More spending in Britain

Tony Blair's Labour government in Britain announced a \$5-billion boost in health spending, and cut-out and incentives to promote. Income tax including a \$200 cut credits for people who drastically file their returns. In his budget, Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown also projected a \$29-billion surplus.



Ugandan soldier moving church bodies down and windows were nailed shut

## Fiery apocalypse of an extremist cult

It was one of Africa's burgeoning extremist Christian cults, but it came to a fiery end in what investigators called a tragedy comprising suicide—and murder. Members of the mysterious sect, many of them parents with small children, were seen last morning of March 17, meeting the fire-baptized prayer house in their remote compound in northwestern Uganda. Doors and windows were nailed shut from the inside, and the cultists, who belonged to the Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God, prepared for their imminent rescue by the Blessed Virgin. Instead, as many as 600 of these fervent followers of Joseph Kibweme, a 68-year-old ex-colonial policeman, former Roman Catholic priest and self-proclaimed prophet, died in a horrific blaze ignited by exploding caches of gasoline. More horror came at weeks end with the discovery 30 km away of more than 150 strangled and dismembered bodies, including 39 children, buried secret as weeks ago in a house belonging to the cult.

Ugandan investigators said it is unknown whether Kibweme and other cult leaders were among the first discovery of burned bodies. Residents of the nearby town of Katuraga, 320 km southwest of the Ugandan capital of Kampala, said the cultists, many of them former Roman Catholics, had been preparing for what they assumed would be a peaceful journey to heaven. They had said their farewell to acquaintances in surrounding villages, feasted on roasted bull and rosbif, and burned their possessions. "They were aware they were to die," said village Assistant Komandant, "because the Virgin Mary had promised to appear at the camp during the morning hours to carry them to heaven."

Kibweme is believed to have convinced his followers that the end was nearby, telling them he had heard, and recorded on tape, a conversation between Jesus and the Blessed Virgin. Investigations suspect he and a small circle of confidants, which included two former Catholic priests, an ex-nurse and a one-time prostitute, may have planned to incinerate other members of the cult after luring them into the prayer house. They were able to murder 350 bodies, including 78 children, but believe others were seduced to ask. As well, the investigation turned up several bodies in a forest, raising suspicions that they had been murdered.

The Ugandans tragically bore eerie similarities to another cult horror—the 1978 mass suicide of 914 followers of the Rev. Jim Jones, who perished at Jonestown, Guyana, by drinking a first juice spiked with cyanide.

## Ford Car-Seat Clinics

Still not sure about your child's restraint system? Again, your Ford dealer can help. Most dealerships conduct special Car-Seat Clinics at their premises in conjunction with Canadian Automobile Association (CAA) representatives, local police and public health nurses. There, experts answer questions about child restraint systems: what system is recommended for children the size of yours; how to install the seat in the car; how to secure the child properly into the seat. Ask your sales associate for more details.



# Canada is Hot!

Why top Wall Street analysts see the country as a major 'buy'

By Andrew Phillips in New York

Anyone who wants to be cheered up about Canada's prospects need only ascend to the 11th floor of Morgan Stanley Dean Witter's impressive building in Times Square at the heart of New York City. There, in an office decorated with Canadian posters ("Let's go, Canada!" reads the slogan on an old First World War recruiting appeal) and strewn with copies of *Maclean* and *The Globe and Mail*, is the firm's chief Canada-watcher, Jon Johnson. From where he sits, it looks as though the 21st century (or at least the first few years of it) really may belong to Canada. The stars are lining up, he says, for the country to turn in a stellar economic performance this year—and perhaps well beyond. "Canada," says Johnson, "could be on the verge of a very prosperous period."

He's not alone. The people who pay closest attention to Canada on Wall Street are unanimous: the outlook for the country has seldom been better. "The prospects are unbelievable," says Gabriel de Kock, chief economist for Canada at Salomon Smith Barney Inc. "Canada right now is enjoying the best of all worlds," adds Karin Buser, senior vice-president and Canada specialist at Merrill Lynch & Co. Inc. And in a recent newsletter to clients, Carl Weinberg of High Frequency Economics, a consulting firm based in suburban Valhalla, N.Y., gushed: "The Canadian economy continues to amaze investors."

You don't have to consult Wall Street, of course, to know that Canada's economy is soaring along at an impressive rate—such growth is a robust 4.2 per cent last year, low inflation and falling unemployment. The surprise is that the outlook among these influen-

tial U.S. observers—whose views help to shape those of key players like mutual fund managers and foreign exchange dealers—is so much more positive than that typically found in Canada. While Canadians worry that the good times are fragile and fear that the country is missing out on the U.S. technology boom, the Americans see Canada as an increasingly active center of cutting-edge innovation.

More and more, they say, Canada is tracking in reputation as a largely commodity-based economy and attracting attention for leading high-tech firms—both established leaders like Nortel Networks and BCE Inc., as well as up-and-coming fiber-optics leader JDS Uniphase Corp. of Ottawa, wireless-mail pioneer Research In Motion Ltd. of Waterloo, Ont., and financial software specialist 724 Solutions Inc. of Toronto. Those and other companies are fueling new interest by U.S. investors in the Toronto Stock Exchange—where gains in the past year have far outstripped those on the struggling New York Stock Exchange. Americans bought Canadian stocks worth \$16.9 billion in 1999, more than double what they purchased in 1997. And a recent survey of U.S. portfolio managers by Broadstreet Consultants of New York showed that all intend to increase their Canadian holdings this year. "The new economy stocks have really put the TSE on the map," says Buser.

The difference is partly a matter of national psychology. Americans often bubble over with enthusiasm—even when things are going badly—while Canadians can find gloom in almost any situation. A Canadian who served in the senior ranks of the federal finance departments in Ottawa and now observes his homeland from the executive suite of one of New York's biggest banks, puts it this way: "Canadians are always looking for the cloud in any silver lining."

More important, the divergent views are the result of bitter experience in Canada. Wall Street watched warily as the country struggled through most of the 1990s, starting the decade with a deep recession and exploding federal deficits. By the time the Liberal government came to power in November, 1995, the country's crucial debt-to-GDP ratio was at 96.8 per cent and rising (it would hit a high of 99.2 per cent in 1995, second only to Italy among industrialized countries)—throwing into doubt its ability to continue to



Morgan Stanley's Johnson: the *Ottawa nerve* between Canada could be on the verge of a very prosperous period

borrow on international markets. "I think Canada's back was up against the wall," says Johnson. "There's no doubt." Those were the years when Finance Minister Paul Martin overruled so New York immediately after each budget to repair Ottawa's damaged credibility with key foreign investors.

Even when Canada emerged from recession, it was plagued by slow growth, high taxes, deep spending cuts and persistent high unemployment. When commodity prices rose in 1994, the Canadian dollar should have gotten a boost on international markets—but it was sidetracked by the effects of the Mexican peso crisis that year and depressed by political uncertainty leading up to the 1995 Quebec referendum. The Asian economic crisis of 1997-1998 was another blow, depressing demand for Canadian commodities like minerals and lumber. The U.S. economy, meanwhile, took off—leaving Canadians peering through the window of their rich neighbor's party. "It was a lousy decade—Canadians were awfully squared," says de Kock. "And perceptions tend to lag behind real performance in the economy."

Now, de Kock and others see a happy confluence of positive factors. The U.S. economy continues in record boom, drawing in Canadian exports with no end in sight. Most Asian economies are recovering briskly, and prices of raw materials that still underpin much of Canada's economy are rising—leading to a positive shift in the country's terms of trade (the prices of its exports are rising faster than those of its imports). Ottawa is running surpluses rather than deficits. Quebec's potential strains on the national fabric are at a low ebb, and there is no sign that prosperity is leading to the kind

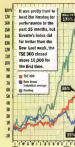
of upward pressure on wage costs that could spark inflation.

Indeed, says Weinberg of High Frequency Economics, productivity gains are reaching wage increases—a solid formula for growing prosperity. The ingredients, he adds, are in place for sustained growth without inflation. "A very benign setup," Merrill Lynch forecasts four-per-cent growth this year, while Salomon Smith Barney sees 4.25 per cent and Weinberg says it could hit 4.5. All those estimates have been revised upward since the end of 1999—and all are higher than the 3.5 per cent projected by the Conference Board of Canada.

The forecasts also are a cue in the Canadian dollar, in Morgan Stanley's case to 71.5 cents (U.S.), by the end of the year (from last year's level of 68.4 cents). The economy's fundamentals would indicate a faster rise for the loonie—but currency dealers have been burned so often by overestimating its potential that they tend to be cautious. "The Canadian dollar is the currency-foreign exchange dealer love to hate, or hate to love," says de Kock, "because they've lost more money on it than on any other." Still, he adds: "There's a possibility that the perception may change and people will see the dollar not as a commodity currency but as a new economy currency. If that happens that's a huge upside."

All the good news means that Martin no longer makes his regular pilgrimages to New York. After February's budget, the finance department sent several officials to meet with Wall Street analysts, but since Ottawa is no longer borrowing there to cover an annual deficit, it has less need to woo them. Still, Martin's hard-won reputation as a fiscal conservative gives him a key role in managing U.S. markets that

## SURGING MARKETS





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## Business

Canada's various new course will continue. Wall Street was impressed that Martin actually addressed the issue of Canada's high taxes and lagging incentives for high-tech innovation in his February budget, and worries that he may stop aside or be ruled out due to the leadership battle between him and Prime Minister Jean Chrétien.

As a result, the speculation over Martin's future is carefully tucked in New York. "The belief here," says Weinberg, who interviewed the finance minister in February for his client newsletter, "is that the only serious source of economic thinking in Ottawa is Paul Martin and the people around him." Adds de Kock: "It would be negative if he leaves, because it would mean that the most important

mind," he says, "is not in New York and think Canadian thinking."

Like many Canadians, Johnson applauds Martin's efforts to bring down taxes. But in the next breath he adds that many Canadians suggest their tax burden because they do not take adequate account of the costs services they receive.

"When Canadians feel their taxes are so high, it's distorted because government is so much more important," he says. "There's a danger in making absolute comparisons to the States."

Naturally, there are shadows amid the bright light of Canada's emerging new economy as seen from Wall Street. Can the American boom, already the longest on record, continue? Will the rising U.S. market in high-tech stocks collapse and



### BUYING AND SELLING CANADIAN STOCKS

Value of American transactions in Canadian shares (in negative shows more sold than bought)



Solomon Storch, Berney de Kock: the dollar may be seen as a new currency currency

advocate of modelling the role of government in this country has given up." Speculation over Martin's future, he says, has already taken a toll. "It probably means a cost off the Canadian dollar."

Nevertheless, Wall Street's Canada-watchers do not fit any simplistic stereotype of knowing-nothing right-wingers demanding that Canada adopt U.S. models or suffer the consequences. After years of studying the country, they tend to have sophisticated and nuanced views. In the case of Morgan Stanley's Johnson, a 33-year-old native of Omaha, Neb., that outlook is enhanced by daily consumption of Canadian news media (including listening to CBC Radio over the Internet, frequent visits and a taste for reading Quebec literature in translation. "I'm

take the economy down with it" Wall Street, increasingly under control on both sides of the border, now in head-on and choke off prosperity with higher interest rates? Johnson listened carefully to a recent speech by Bank of Canada governor Gordon Thiessen at the Harvard Club in Manhattan, and concluded that Thiessen is concerned about the U.S. economy overheating and will likely be more inclined to raise Canadian interest rates, as the bank did last week. At the same time, Johnson sees signs that the jump in oil prices—they have tripled in little more than a year—may be overblowing into other costs. "That could be the catalyst that ends the party," he worries. For now, though, the party continues—and Wall Street is cheering Canada on. ■

## Real cashes out

Investor-based pollster and market research guru Angus Reid was smiling last week after he sold his 21-year-old firm to a French company for about \$100 million. Lyon SA of Paris will merge Angus Reid Group Inc. into its operations but retain the Canadian management team. Founder and CEO Reid, who will stay with the company, said that arrangement was crucial to the deal: he declined previous international merger offers, he said, because they did not include sufficient Canadian autonomy. The privately held company, one of the largest independent pollsters in the country, has annual revenues of about \$35 million.

## Books and bulks

Behemoth book retailer Indigo Books & Music Inc. purchased one of Toronto's premier gardening stores, Crutchfield's Inc. Indigo, whose owner, Heather Horvath, says it is one of Crutchfield's best customers, will now market gardening items on its Web site. The move follows a similar suggestion by mail book retailer Chappin Inc., which bought Montreal-based Garden Group Ltd. earlier this year.

## Soaring trade surplus

Exports rose by four per cent in January, compared with the previous month, reaching \$35.2 billion, while imports fell to \$28.6 billion. Strong sales of cars, energy exports and machinery to the driving U.S. market were key reasons, along with seasonal factors.

## War on flatulence

A Calgary company with extensive investments in oil proposes to spend millions of dollars to reduce the amount of digestive gas produced by African cows, sometimes blamed for contributing to global warming. TransAlta Corp. says that by spraying livestock feed, it can greatly reduce the amount of methane the animals produce. The company wants to take advantage of rules allowing the international "trading" of credits for cutting greenhouse gas emissions, thus allowing more gas-producing coal to be burned in Canada within the target level.

## Business Notes

### Cinar's troubles

Montreal-based animator Cinar Corp. faced growing scrutiny over millions of dollars in missing investments. Cinar has been reeling under allegations that \$179 million was transferred out of the company without the approval of the company's board. About \$112 million has not been recovered. After the March 6 announcement, Cinar said that Ron Weinberg, co-founder of Cinar with his wife, Michelle Charet, in 1978, was not involved in the transfer. Nevertheless, he and Charet resigned their executive duties, although they still own 60 per cent of the privately held company. Hiram Papp, a senior executive vice president who managed the transfer, was fired. But last week, Cinar's new managers said that Weinberg may have been involved in the transfer. The company has launched a lawsuit against a trio of investment companies, including two based in the Bahamas, in an effort to reclaim the missing funds. Meanwhile, federal authorities continue to investigate Cinar, which produces popular children's shows like *Arthur* and *The Adventures of Robinson Bear*, for fear of putting the names of Canadian writers and scriptwriters by Americans in order to claim tax credits.



Charet (left) and Weinberg, smiling

### CTV gets the go-ahead to buy TSN

The CRTC ruled that CTV, Canada's largest private TV network, can buy NewStar Communications Inc. and its all-sports channel, TSN, as long as CTV sells Sportsnet, its own sports broadcaster. CTV said it would not comment on the ruling until it had reached the terms with its partners. BCE Inc., which proposes to buy CTV, was required to answer questions, include the \$489-million NewStar acquisition in a condition of the subsequent deal. CRTC executives praised the ruling, saying Sportsnet with TSN could have given CTV a near-monopoly on sports.

### Financial Outlook

Interest rates continued their upward climb last week. The third hike in four months boosted the Bank of Canada's rate to 5.5 per cent, up by one

quarter of a percentage point. The widely anticipated increase followed a similar move by the U.S. Federal Reserve Board, which raised its benchmark rate to six per cent, up from 5.75 per cent. Officials in both countries said fears of inflation prompted the increases, but experts expect that further hikes will be needed before North America's ailing economies are followed by higher borrowing costs. Economists at the Toronto Dominion Bank believe Canada will try to maintain financial stability as it works to pulling the country's ailingly recent economic recovery.



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CTV

## Business Notes

### Cable switches

Canada's two largest cable companies announced a major alliance that included a swap of territories and a merger of Internet services. Subject to CRTC approval, Toronto-based Rogers Communications Inc. will transfer its B.C. cable assets to Calgary-based Shaw Communications Inc. Rogers will pick up Shaw's cable properties in southern Ontario and New Brunswick, effectively carving up the west and east of the country between them. But soon after, Rogers faced a challenge to its plans in Quebec as media conglomerate Quebecor Inc. announced a \$5.9-billion hostile takeover bid for Montreal-based Groupe Vidéotron Inc., the province's largest cable operator.

Quebecor's move on Friday came just three days before Vidéotron shareholders were to vote on a \$5.6-billion share exchange with Rogers, a friendly merger that was announced on Feb. 7. The Quebecor bid is backed by Capital Communications CDP Inc., a subsidiary of the giant Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec, the province's major pension fund and a Vidéotron minority shareholder. The Caisse claims it has the right to veto the deal with Rogers.

Shaw and Rogers, meanwhile, also agreed to merge 89 Home Canada and Encanto to form a new Internet portal and high-speed access system to be called EncoreCanada. Rogers will own 51 per cent of the new entity. It will join Shaw in investing in Vancouver-based 360networks Inc., a leader in the construction of long-distance fibre-optic networks.

### Nortel shops again

Nortel Networks Corp. and its well-buy laser component maker CorTel Inc. of Wilmington, Mass. The \$2-billion, all-stock deal followed two other Nortel acquisitions in 1998 as the company inched on the market for fibre-optic networks. CorTel is developing laser-diode technology to transmit a range of higher frequencies on one line. Other chips transmit only one frequency.



Ross Laver

## The reality of gas prices

**Just what we need**—another taxpayer-funded inquiry into gasoline prices. It's apparently not enough that we have \$450 civil actions swirling around Industry Canada and another 3,880 taxpayer suits worn at the departments of natural resources. Even with all those lawsuits at their disposal, the federal Liberals still can't seem to figure out what's going on in the oil industry. To get to the bottom of this vexing situation, Industry Minister John Manley is setting aside \$750,000 to fund an independent study by the Conference Board of Canada, an Ottawa-based think-tank.

When the report is finished, we can throw it on the shelf with all those other government gas-pricing studies, each one a complete waste of time and money. Why? Because the politicians who commission these reports know perfectly well why gasoline costs what it does. They're simply too chicken to tell the public, the truth. It's much safer to sit back and pocket figures at a couple of eye-raising "fact" sheets, tout oil companies and the greedy, covetous people who run your local service station.

The most shameless practitioners of this craft is Ontario Premier Mike Harris. On every other issue, Harris enthusiastically comes up to big business—curbing taxes, dismantling environmental regulations, even selling off Crown land to wealthy developers at fire-sale prices. But on the subject of gas prices, Harris's five-month inquiries give way to classic left-wing coverings about corporate complicity. Actually, this isn't as strange as it sounds. Harris's government depends on the support of suburban middle-class voters, the sort of people who drive 50 km each way to and from work and look upon cheap gas as a birthright. As Brian Mulroney used to say "You dance with the one who brings you." And from Harris's standpoint, what's wrong with a little hypocrisy if it helps him get re-elected?

Facts even with the recent price increases, gasoline costs about the same now as it did in the mid-1980s, after you take inflation into account.

Facts roughly half the retail price of gasoline is made up of taxes—including GST, which is charged on top of federal and provincial excise taxes (in other words, a tax on a tax). When, in the case now, the international price of crude oil goes up, so does the amount collected by Ontario.

Facts: if the provinces and Ontario hadn't repeatedly raised taxes, gas would be cheaper now in real dollars than in the 1980s.

Part of the share of the pump price that goes to refining and marketing (aka the oil companies) has been falling since 1990, thanks to increased efficiencies and the closure of thousands of uneconomical service stations.

Facts: a typical big-city gas station pumps roughly an million litres a year. Assuming an average retail markup of five cents a litre, that's \$300,000 in annual gross profit. Out of that, the owner must pay salaries, rent, insurance, utilities and so on. Most gas stations would go out of business if it wasn't for the money they make selling windshield-washer fluid, soft drinks, potato chips and the like.

Facts: the reason gas stations change their prices in unison is that if they didn't, customers would go elsewhere. There's really no brand loyalty in the gasoline business. Most owners will cross the street to save 0.2 cents a litre. And why not? It's all the same oil!

Facts: gasoline is increasingly a loss leader in large urban gas stations, a way to get people to drive into the lot. The hope is that, having stopped to refuel, they'll also buy a jug of milk, meet a friend, withdraw some cash from the ATM and grab a coffee and a doughnut for the road. Ticked off by the price of gas? Heck, you should use a markup on your doughnut. (Not to mention what it's doing to your waistline.)



Tenants-area stations, motorists are ticked off

**Here's a question for Mike Harris** and all those other oil-industry oilies: If it's true that companies like Petro-Canada and Imperial Oil Ltd. are making no discernible profits because of higher gas prices, why are their shares worth no more now than at the beginning of 1998, when gas was much cheaper?

And if motorists are so concerned about the cost of gasoline, why are sales of gas-pumping trucks and two-ton sport-utility vehicles (typical consumption: 10 miles per gallon in the city, 16 on the highway) at record levels?

If we're going to get mad at anyone for the fact that gas prices have jumped about 30 per cent over the past year, we should direct our anger at the oil-producing countries that belong to OPEC. But think about this first: a litre of gasoline, even with all the taxes, sells for significantly less than the equivalent amount of Coke (cost of production a few cents). Every year, we in North America import billions of barrels of crude oil from the Middle East. And every year, they buy billions of dollars' worth of soft drinks from us in the West. Makes me wonder who's getting the new deal?

## Climbing a 3-D Everest

When Byron Smith leads his elite high-tech trek up the world's tallest mountain, Internet users will be able to experience an Everest ascent as never before. Smith, a Vulcan, Alta., climber and car dealer, left Canada for Nepal on March 15 and is making his way to the Mount Everest base camp, with plans to scale the 8,850-m peak in May. On his Web site monitoring Smith's heavily promoted expedition ([www.cbc.ca/everest2000](http://www.cbc.ca/everest2000)), the CBC is using special software called Galt3D to allow armchair climbers to see—almost literally—different sides of the mountain. The program, made by the Swedish firm Cycore, is now widely regarded as the industry leader for rendering life-like, interactive, three-dimensional images on Web pages.



Currently, site visitors can see (under Gamma) three-dimensional mountaineering lenses and aerial, while Smith offers audio tips on techniques. But the pièce de résistance, says Ted Lanoce, Cycore Canada's Toronto-based chief executive, will be a 3-D model of Everest itself being produced by Halifax-based Pureplay Productions Inc.

Internet surfers will be able to spin and zoom in to view the terrain and zoom Smith's expedition will take. "It will give people a real appreciation of what these guys are going through," says Lanoce.

Computer users require a free plug-in viewer for their Internet browser obtainable from Cycore's home page ([www.pureplay.com](http://www.pureplay.com)). Even with slow connections, Galt3D's picture files are quickly downloaded—no screaming involved—because they

are a mere 200 kilobytes or less in size. Since launching the program a year ago, Cycore has landed some heavy-weight Web clients, ranging from Toys 'n' Lego. Now, it wants to become the three-dimensional standard for e-business. Last week, it launched Galt3D 3.0, which permits the insertion of interactive 3-D images into

Microsoft PowerPoint presentations and Adobe Acrobat files. Sitepeople can project products in all their three-dimensional glory at conferences, or send electronic files to e-mailers showing how new items work. For Cycore, it all looks like a mountain of opportunity.

## Super brain

Peter Poole and Allan MacIsaac had to leave Canada to work on supercomputers because there weren't any available to them at home. Both men, who grew up together in Antigonish, N.S., later returned and are now professors of applied mathematics at the University of Western Ontario in London. Wanting to plug the brain drain, Poole and MacIsaac helped build a \$1.6-billion supercomputer in a joint effort between the university and computer manufacturer Compaq Canada Inc. Their efforts led last week to the opening of the Compaq-Western Centre for Computational Research, which

hosts the most powerful supercomputer running the Linux open source operating system in the country. There are 15 workstations with access to 50 processors which, when combined, can perform more than 50 billion operations per second, or at least 200 times faster than a high-end PC. Fields of research include improving radiation therapy for cancer treatment, designing better aircraft wings and developing new high-performance materials. "It's a good reason," says MacIsaac, "to stick around in Canada."

## Cool Sites

### Knowledge sale

Got a good recipe—or a knockout business presentation? At the moment [www.know.com](http://www.know.com), there's a chance to recycle it for cash. Know.com permits visitors to buy and sell "digital knowledge" in text, graphic, video or audio formats. The wide-ranging content includes firsthand experiences from ad-

venturers, learned essays and even a best-maid speech. Those looking for information can leave a question—and bid on a price of any submitted answer.

## Regis wired

It had to happen, Walt Disney Co.'s ABC Television and its online affiliate Go.com are putting an interactive version of the quiz-show phenomenon *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*, hosted by Regis Philbin, on the Internet. Starting this week, cyber-participants at [www.abc.com](http://www.abc.com) can answer the same questions as contestants on television, at the same time competing with others online. Surfers, however, will have to settle for baseball caps and CD-ROMs as prizes instead of large cash handouts. Is that your final offer, Regis?

*Philbin interactive*

Danilo Hawlichska



Philbin interactive

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# The Alberta Test

RALPH KLEIN WANTS PRIVATE CLINICS TO PLAY A BIGGER ROLE IN HEALTH CARE. WILL HE BACK DOWN?

*Klein talking to reporters with Chelms (front), a strategy aimed at reducing surgical waiting lists*

By Brian Bergman in Edmonton

Sitting in his wood-paneled office at the Alberta legislature, Ralph Klein contemplates the political fire storm raging outside his door. Succinctly, the Alberta premier sums up the negative public perception of his controversial health-care legislation that, if passed, would expand the private sector's role in providing surgery. "The great debate," Klein tells *Maclean's* during a wide-ranging interview last week, "is whether this is the beginning of the so-called slippery slope down the road to two-tiered medicine." The allegation, he adds, is that his Conservative government is out to create "this awful American-style for-profit type of health care."

Lame it is to Klein, a former television reporter, to provide a pithy snapshot of the political crimes of which he stands accused. But just as swiftly, the premier proclaims his innocence—citing his own famous instant for political survival as evidence. Why, Klein asks, would he set out to dismantle Canada's cherished medicine system? "I wouldn't do anything so purposefully and intentionally get myself indicted," he says. "I don't want to get fired."

On that score, at least, Klein's critics and supporters agree: the premier is a consummate politician, one who rarely allows himself to get far out of step with the electorate. As Calgary's hugely popular mayor from 1980 to 1989, and especially as premier for the past seven years, Klein has often courted controversy—but never public censure. For many political observers, that makes his crusade on behalf of Bill 11—officially known as the Health Care Protection Act—

the more puzzling. Just when Alberta is in the enviable position of pouring surplus dollars into an ailing public health-care system, Klein is pushing for a greater role for private-sector medicine—and contending with the unease and fear such a move inevitably engenders. University of Calgary political science David Taitz is among those scratching their heads. "Normally," says Taitz, "Klein has an incredibly acute sense of where the public is at on a given issue. But on this one, he seems to be offside."

An Angus Reid Group survey on political trends reinforced that view last week. A poll of 800 Albertans conducted during the last week of February pegged the government's approval rating at 66 per cent, a seven-point drop since October, and its lowest level in two years. Klein's personal approval rating also dropped, to 63 per cent from 71. While even those adored numbers would be the envy of many a political leader in Canada, a more ominous finding for Klein emerged from the survey undertaken as his privatization proposals dominated public discussion. The number of Albertans citing health care as their most important concern ballooned to 72 per cent from 47 per cent in October.

Already, though, there are clear signals of the lengths Klein is willing to go to stem the groundswell against Bill 11. The most conservative aspect of the legislation are provisions that, for the first time, would allow some private clinics in Alberta to perform surgical procedures requiring overnight stays. The types of operations performed in what the government dubs "approved surgical facilities" would be determined by the provincial college of physicians and surgeons. Possible proce-

dures would include breast, liver, gall bladder, and ear, nose and throat surgery. All operations would be fully covered by the provincial health-care plan.

Klein has round the plan as a sincere effort to reduce surgical waiting lists—often stretching upwards of 12 months—and relieve pressure on the public system so that it can deal more effectively with major cases such as heart attacks and serious trauma. He has spoken of the losses he suffers from ordinary Albertans refusing the pain of loved ones awaiting basic surgery. Klein also brings personal experience to the table: he watched last year as his father, Phil, a former professional wrestler, waited in agony for a hip replacement.

For months, Klein maintained that a prime reason for Bill 11 was to reduce the waiting list for hip-replacement operations. But the day after the bill was tabled on March 2, that argument lost credence when the register for the Alberta College of Physicians and Surgeons said most hip replacements were likely to be done in private clinics. At the same time, prominent physicians and medical associations have stated that the real key to reducing waiting lists is better rooming and nursing and making the best possible use of existing public facilities.

Last week, Klein spoke in detail for the first time about specific measures he is contemplating to appease critics who abhor the notion of for-profit health care. Asked by *Maclean's* if he would consider amending Bill 11 to confine surgeries requiring overnight stays to non-profit clinics only, he replied, "Am I going to say yes to that right now? No, I can't say yes to that." Then he continued: "I can say that would be a reasonable amendment to put on the table—and to debate the

pros and cons." He also addressed from that Bill 11 would throw the doors open to American service providers. At the very least, he said, he is giving serious thought to amending the bill, when it comes up for formal debate on April 4, to have it state a clear "preference" for contracting out surgeries to Canadian not-for-profit clinics.

It remained unclear, however, whether such measures would quell the howls of protest from organizations lined up against the legislation, including the Canadian and Alberta medical associations, the Canadian and Alberta associations of registered nurses, and the Alberta chapter of the Consumers' Association of Canada. Then there is the Friends of Medicine, a loose coalition of union accountants, clergy and seniors, which, together with the Alberta Liberal party, has staged raucous town-hall meetings on Bill 11 across the province.

That campaign is being financed primarily by the Canadian Union of Public Employees, which represents 150,000 health-care workers across the country. In addition to a series of television ads claiming that Klein is putting medicine at risk, CUPE commissioned local opinion polls that argue that, because of the North American Free Trade Agreement, Bill 11 could lead to a flood of U.S. corporations providing Canadians with health-care services (page 46).

Bill 11 is the hot political issue in Alberta. It has consumed the daily question period during the legislature's spring session, which began on Feb. 17. Klein's chief opponent is opposition leader Nancy Mathers, a former Conservative health minister and Klein leadership rival before he was elected Liberal leader in 1994. There is no love lost between

## Special Report



## 'Canadians look to the government of Canada as the guardian of the Canada Health Act'

—Health Minister Allan Rock

Rock (left) MacBeth dismissed by Klein as 'a disgrace,' and 'a lot of mouth and no substance'

Minister's attitude much more than I like Mr. Rock's."

In his interview with MacBeth, Klein was more blunt, saying he found it "bizarre" that a federal minister should urge a province to kill a bill even before it was passed. "We've been asking him all along to tell us if the bill violates the Canada Health Act and, if so, how can we fix it? But he won't do that. He just says he doesn't like it, scrap it." In a conversation with MacBeth after the Klein-Charbonneau meeting, Rock did not repeat his advice to withdraw the bill, instead backing the Prime Minister's stance that Ottawa would pass judgments only after any amendments were in place. Ottawa, he added, has a duty to monitor health-care developments in the provinces. "Canadians look to the government of Canada as the guardian of the Canada Health Act," said Rock, who meets with his provincial counterparts this week. "We don't have 10 provincial health-care systems—we have one national system."

Klein, however, accuses the federal Liberals of harbouring "an anti-Alberta agenda." The premier saw signs of this in last week's revelation that, for the past two years, a private surgery clinic in Montreal has turned operating rooms to surgeons from the area's public hospitals who, in turn, charged their patients a "facility fee" of about \$400 per hour (page 50). Asked Klein: "Why wouldn't Mr. Rock focus on something like that, which is a flagrant violation of the Canada Health Act, rather than his obsession with the legislation here in Alberta?"

In some respects, Bill 11 does seem an unlikely rallying point for such a high-profile war of words between Ottawa and Edmonton. On one level, the bill represents an attempt to set out rules and conditions for the 53 for-profit, private clinics already offering Alberta day surgeries—for cataracts, cosmetic work, hernia and minor orthopaedic procedures, among others.

As those clinics multiplied in recent years, critics raised concerns about the possibility of some patients being able to go jump ahead of others in line for surgery, or of physicians pressuring patients to buy services beyond those that the provincial health-care plan covers. Bill 11 forbids the practice of queue-jumping and sets forth conditions for how, and where, patients may be sold non-insured goods and services. Violation fine: \$10,000 for a first offence and \$20,000 for each subsequent one.

The legislation's provision to allow private facilities to perform surgeries requiring overnight stays flows, in large part, from the efforts of one such clinic, Calgary's Health Resources Group. On three separate occasions since 1996, the HRG has applied, unsuccessfully, to the Alberta College of Physicians and Surgeons for the right to do such procedures. The college, in turn, asked the provincial government for political direction. Bill 11 is the response.



## 'THE WHOLE NOTION OF PHYSICIAN-AS-ENTREPRENEUR IS FOREIGN TO CANADA'

To its supporters, Bill 11 represents modest reforms that would give health officials greater flexibility in their war on surgical waiting lists. Jim Downing, who served for five years as Klein's provincial treasurer, is now chairman of the Calgary Regional Health Authority. Downing predicts that, if the bill passes, Calgary will roughly double the annual number of surgical procedures currently contracted to the private sector (8,000, compared with 85,000 done in the hospital), thereby relieving some of the pressure on public facilities. "The premier isn't talking about raising the system upside down," says Downing. "All he's saying is health authorities need this one tool in addition to all the other things they are doing."

But to critics like MacBeth, Bill 11 is "Jagan here" legislation that "throws wide open the potential to privatize virtually any part of the health-care system." MacBeth adds that "this whole notion of physician-as-entrepreneur is very foreign to Canada and could very much affect the relationship between doctors and their patients."

MacBeth's argument has clearly struck a nerve. Many Albertans, like other Canadians, hold deep-seated reservations about anything with even the appearance of American-style for-profit medicine. The Alberta boomtowns know this when they drafted Bill 11, which is why the first clause in the legislation states: "No person shall operate a private hospital in Alberta." But that tactic also proved troublesome critics, including Alberta Medical Association president David Bond, accuse the government of hiding behind semantics. They say they see little distinction between a private hospital

and the proposed "surgical facilities" with overnight stays.

Klein's government crossed the debate over Bill 11 carrying other baggage. Severe budget cuts imposed by the Tories in the mid-1990s in a successful bid to eliminate a \$4-billion provincial deficit resulted in layoffs, bed closures and the outright dismantling of some hospitals. The government has started to pump money back into the health-care system—committing an extra \$1.1 billion over three years. But opponents say Bill 11 is the wrong way to fix a problem largely created by the same government: draining hospitals of resources.

As the debate rages, one element is surprisingly absent: Klein's legendary populist touch has rarely been on display in recent weeks. The premier often appears defensive, even petulant. He rejected a challenge from MacBeth to publicly debate Bill 11 outside the legislature by claiming that "every left-wing nut in the country" would be attracted to such a forum—an increase underlined by the fact that among the bill critics are many longtime Tory and Reform party supporters.

All the same, those who have watched Klein over the years doubt he will be content to play defence for very long. The premier's apparent willingness to consider significant amendments to Bill 11—and potentially defuse a national debate he sparked in the first place—suggests his political antennae are back in operation. "Never underestimate Ralph Klein's ability to get back outside with the public," advises the University of Calgary's Iain. "Experience shows their impregnable a almost endless." ■

## Special Report

the two, as evidenced during one recent exchange, when Klein responded to a MacBeth query by calling the Liberal leader "all yep, yep, yep—a lot of mouth and no substance."

But perhaps the premier's most formidable foe is a federal Health Minister Allan Rock. In a March 10 speech at the University of Calgary, Rock argued that Bill 11 would do none of the things in proponents' claims—including shortening waiting lists, cutting costs and improving the quality of patient care. But Rock pointedly declined to answer the most crucial question: Did Bill 11 violate the Canada Health Act, the 1984 federal legislation that sets out the guiding principles for medicine? Klein angrily dismissed Rock's whitewash. Klein accused Rock as a "drive-by assassin" and shot off a one-sentence letter to Prime Minister Jean Chrétien in which he described

Rock's conduct as "a disgrace to you and your government."

Ottawa is still not committing itself on whether Bill 11 directly contravenes the federal health legislation. Before announcing a Liberal hard-nosed stance in Calgary last week, Chrétien met privately with Klein. Chrétien took a conciliatory tone, saying he will wait until Bill 11 is put into practice to see if it leads to any violations of the Canada Health Act. But if it does, he added, Ottawa will not hesitate to punish the province by withholding federal transfer payments. Asked if Klein should withdraw the bill now, Chrétien replied: "That is his job, not mine—I have enough to do in the House of Commons." Earlier in the week, Rock had told the Commons he thought the bill should be withdrawn. Commented Klein after meeting Chrétien: "I like the Prime

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# Stretching the Medicare Envelope

By Mory Jarigan

One of the most intriguing experiments with privately run hospitals took place almost 20 years ago in a small Ontario farming community perched on the Ontario River. In 1982, the four-decade-old Hawkesbury and District General Hospital was so dilapidated and debt-ridden that it could not even borrow funds to rebuild. In desperation, the board hired new management that could obtain financing: American Medical International Inc., a California-based corporation. In return for a set fee of \$300,000 per year, AMI outsourced the management structure and commenced operating the hospital as a publicly funded, nonprofit institution. The result: Hawkesbury hospital has not run a deficit since 1982; it paid off its debt in 1997 and it has been turning its annual surplus—an estimated \$180,000 in 1999-2000—into a fund for new capital expenditures.

So why does hospital president Michel Lalonde reply so tentatively when asked about Alberta Premier Ralph Klein's suggestion to allow privately owned, for-profit surgical facilities? Lalonde has run Hawkesbury hospital for 16 years, starting as AMI's sole Canadian employee and remaining after the contract was cancelled in 1990 because of provincial discontent over the U.S. presence. He points out that when AMI was in control, provincial owners closely scrutinized the hospital's activities to make sure it did not start on some or even open positions acquiring more costly resources simply to save money. As a result, Lalonde says, he absorbed valuable lessons from AMI on how to control unnecessary costs, while being able to resist any pressures to reduce necessary costs. "Privatization is not a dirty word," he says. "But you don't have to privatize to change the way management works." If, after a full dialogue with the community, the decision is to privatize, "you

must also be prepared to regulate," says Lalonde, "to put the hospital under careful scrutiny."

Lalonde's even-handed approach has become a rarity since Alberta's Conservative government introduced its health-care privatization legislation, Bill 11, on March 2. "There is almost no one in the middle on this," observes health care consultant Michael Dexter of Toronto Advocates of the Bill, who said that publicly managed facilities are inefficient, union-controlled relics that are unable to use scarce funds in the best interests of their patients. Critics insist that patients who would suffer



as private providers pushed up the public tab for health care in their quest for profits. Each side has buried the other in conflicting U.S. studies that rarely take account of important factors such as patients' outcomes. "We have not done a good job of figuring out how to judge the overall efficiency of the health-care system," says Dr. Virek Goel, chairman of the University of Toronto's health-innovation department. "We don't know enough to judge private for-profit. We need pilot projects."



Lalonde: with privatization, "you must be prepared to put the hospital under careful scrutiny"

## WHILE ALBERTA CONSIDERS MORE PRIVATIZATION, THE IMPLICATIONS AND POTENTIAL GAINS ARE STILL UNCLEAR

The problem is that pilot projects may be irreversible. Although Klein has carefully stipulated that the facilities will not be "hospitals," there remains a serious risk that he is enlarging the role of private, for-profit providers in the health-care system by permitting them to offer so-called core services, such as knee replacements, which could require overnight stays. That could prompt U.S. or Mexican investors to invoke the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement—and demand the right to deliver similar surgical services to Albertans. If a NAFTA panel agreed with them, it would be almost impossible—and very expensive—to dislodge them because they could sue for future losses if Alberta decided to return to a policy that only public facilities should provide such surgical care. "The problem for Alberta is that social policy innovation will become a one-way street," warns Barry Appleton, a specialist in international trade law. "Anyone who says otherwise is being willfully blind."

The Alberta bill has also sparked widespread fear that it could start an unresolvable cross-Canada move towards private providers and private purchasers. Bill 11 would permit the new surgical facilities to offer "enhanced medical goods or services" that go beyond what is required in generally accepted medical practice. What happens to the health-care system if surgeons can offer extra services or more advanced procedures? Will wealthier patients in other provinces start to demand the right to pay for extra medical goods and services out of their own pockets? Will paying patients receive faster treatment? Toronto law professor Colleen Flood, who specializes in health policy, says that Bill 11 could lead to a sec-

ond tier in the health-care system, which could violate the Canada Health Act's insurance an universal, comprehensive care. "I am really concerned," she says. "I did not worry so much about the fact that care was going to be privately provided—as long as it remained publicly funded. But this bill could be a cunning way to permit privately funded care."

The contribution of the private sector to health care has been a source of controversy for decades. Vancouver orthopedic surgeon Brian Day, a medical director of the city's private, for-profit Canby Surgery Centre—and he also practices in the publicly funded University of British Columbia Hospital. The Canby centre, opened in 1996, provides orthopedic care to injured women from other provinces, clients of provincial workers' compensation boards and foreigners. The B.C. government will not pay for the facility's for-profit services. So ordinary Vancouver residents wait 18 months for orthopedic surgery paid for by medicare—while patients covered by workplace insurance plans wait less than a month for Canby's for-profit care. "We have offered to do contract service for the B.C. government at 60 per cent of the public system's cost," says Day, deeply frustrated by the refusal.

Efficiency, of course, is not the sole preserve of for-profit facilities. The Toronto area's private Shandon Hospital does heart operations at a cost far below public. It is one of six private hospitals across Canada that were operating prior to the passage of provincial laws to prohibit new private facilities after the adoption of medicare. The Shandon delivers a single, clearly defined service so successfully that it is a Harvard business school case study. Last year, it performed 7,400 heart

Protesters protest against Bill 11, critics insist that private care would suffer with more private providers



*Appleton, NAFTA arbitrators could allow American—and Mexican—entrepreneurs access to the Alberta health-care system*

has found that for-profit hospitals are less expensive."

Frequently lost in the uproar over Bill 11 is the fact that private, for-profit providers already play a large role in the Canadian medical system. Most physicians are private providers who contract their services to the government. Private clinics provide numerous public services ranging from blood tests to radiology and dialysis. The Canadian Institute for Health Information estimates that more than \$26 billion of the \$86 billion in total health-care spending last year came from private sources (such as individuals and employers)—paying for drugs and dental care, among other services.

The question is not whether there should be privatization—but how much further Canadians want to go in that direction. The NAFTA complication arises from the fact that Canada protected health care from foreign intrusion by tacking it into a so-called reservation clause to exempt it from key provisions of the treaty. But the protection only applies "in the extent that they are social services established or maintained for a public purpose." Because many economists are always interpreted narrowly, that should set off alarm bells: the United States has argued that when private providers enter a social service sector, that sector becomes a commercial service. If NAFTA arbitrators agree, U.S. or Mexican investors would be able to apply for Alberta contracts. (It is not likely that the ruling would extend to other provinces.) They could request compensation if they were unfairly treated—and sue for damages if Alberta returned to public-only rational facilities. And while Alberta argues that government purchasing practices for health care are exempted from NAFTA investment obligations, Appleton, the trade law specialist, says that provision applies only to the federal government. "Once you understand the reservation," he says, "you understand why what Premier Klein is doing is particularly provocative."

In the end, Canadians must ask themselves how Alberta's approach compares with other ways of reforming the health-care system. "Ralph Klein has provoked people who really want to save medicine into doing some serious soul-searching," says Toronto health policy analyst Dr. Michael Rachlis, who argues that provinces must change the way that they deliver services—while preserving public payment. "But Alberta's proposals would probably increase costs—and they might even decrease quality," Rachlis argues. That governments could save far more money by encouraging doctors to work in multidisciplinary teams, which include nurse practitioners and dietitians, in order to provide better preventive care to patients with chronic illnesses. There could also be more palliative and home-care programs. "The only hope for real change and improvement is a public debate," says Hugh Segal, president of the Montreal-based Institute for Research on Public Policy. Bill 11 has put the entire system under a microscope—and forced Canadians to look. ■

## COULD REBUFFED AMERICAN INVESTORS SUE FOR DAMAGES?

operators, pocketed \$5 million from the Oranor health plan to cover Oranor-based patients, collected funds from other provinces and foreigners—and balanced its books.

The simple fact is that the formula for efficiency remains elusive. Single service providers like the Shoolice and Canine facilities apparently have an advantage. "There is a lot of evidence," notes Decker, "that very focused facilities—that is, clinics that do high volume of the same service—can be very efficient." But too many of those "factories," he adds, could demand the ability of general hospitals to deliver those same services efficiently to a small number of patients with multiple problems. There might be too few patients for hospitals to be able to afford the needed equipment—and surgeons could lack exposure. "That," says Decker, "is the tension."

Studies to determine if public or private ownership in itself makes an institution more efficient are open to interpretation. Such studies must often rely on U.S. data that usually track the cost of medicare patients in for-profit institutions compared with the cost in nonprofit and/or public institutions. Martin Zeldin, health policy researcher at Vancouver's Fraser Institute, detected a slight advantage in for-profit hospitals when he examined 24 U.S. studies. Seven showed better for-profit performance, five showed the nonprofits and 12 found no difference. But Edmonstone policy analyst Kevin Telf, who was critical of Bill 11 in a *Parliamentary* study, dismisses Zeldin's interpretation of the U.S. research as "misleading." He cites an editorial published last year in the *New England Journal of Medicine* that states: "For decades, studies have shown that for-profit hospitals are three to 11 per cent more expensive than not-for-profits. No peer-reviewed study

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Special Report

# A Healthy Private Sector

## AMERICANS ARE FLOCKING TO CANADIAN CLINICS THAT OFFER AN ARRAY OF SERVICES

By Brenda Braswell

When 30-year-old Michigan housewife Tina Robinson decided to have her breast enlarged, she shopped around for doctors near her home in a Detroit suburb. But advice from her boss forced her to reach further afield—to a plastic surgeon in east-end Montreal. Happy with the breast-implant surgery she received, the friend recommended Dr. Gerald Rheault. Robinson was initially hesitant to cross the border for surgery, but she and her husband drove 10 hours to Rheault's office in January. She estimates her implants and travel costs exceeded \$5,000, compared with quotes of more than \$7,000 from doctors close to home. While the price was a bonus, Robinson says, the money decided it was worth the drive "because so many people that we knew had been taken and they hadn't had any problems."

Crossing the border for medical treatment might seem like one-way traffic out of Canada. Ontario and Quebec send cancer patients to the United States for radiation treatment

because of bloated waiting lists. On an individual basis, some Canadians cross the border to privately run U.S. health services to avoid long waits in Canada. In Plainburgh, N.Y., an hour's drive from Montreal, gastroenterologist Sabine Hume says about 10 per cent of her patients are Canadian, most of them seeking colonoscopies. "I've always been interested in taking care of Canadians," says Hume, who was raised in Montreal. "I like the way the system is and I think it's a shame."

But as controversy swirls around Alberta's bid to allow private facilities to provide more services, a mini-industry of private clinics already thrives in Canada—in part because of their growing appeal to American patients. These clinics operate, perfectly legally, beyond the scope of the Canada Health Act that regulates the public health system. Along with Canadians, thousands of Americans flock to them for laser eye surgery, thinner tummyes, bigger breasts and other procedures not covered by provincial health plans. Such clinics already operate in Alberta, where the legislation under discussion would let private facilities offer non-complex procedures, for profit, and possibly necessitating an overnight stay.

In just another rare category are clinics that may already be smooching the law. In Quebec, a spokesman for the provincial health insurance board confirmed last week that it is investigating two Montreal clinics regarding cost-billing practices. In one case, hospital-based surgeons offered charging patients a "facility fee" of \$400 an hour so they could rent

operating-room space in a private clinic to do procedures covered by Quebec's medicine. If the allegations are true, said the insurance board's Pierre Bocher, "our stand on this subject is that this is illegal."

Meanwhile, the non-medical clinics thrive at low prices, a favorable exchange rate and Internet. With ads help sell their cheap lase with American. Dr. Claudio De Lorenzis of Kitchener, Ont., president of the Canadian Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery, says increasing numbers of Americans have traveled to Canada for cosmetic surgery over the past few years.

Some of that traffic is drawn by active marketing campaigns in the United States. Dr. Petrus Taylor, for instance, spends about \$1 million a year in radio, television and print advertising to lure Americans to his laser eye surgery business

West women who feel motivated on a table. The centre is one of 15 opened in Canada by Lasek Vision Care, a Vancouver-based public company, which treated 23,000 people last year, half of them from abroad, primarily Americans.

Practised in Canada since 1992, when it was still legally controlled in the United States, the popular eye surgery centres vision using lasers to reshape the surface of the cornea. In Fort Erie, Ont., across the border from Buffalo, N.Y., Dr. Patricia Teal performs the surgery on an almost entirely American clientele. The low Canadian dollar is "a big factor," she says. Bonnie Richards agrees. The 39-year-old housewife recently drove three hours from her home near Concord, N.H., to Sherbrooke, Que., as she could shed the glasses she has worn since Grade 2. Richards knows of 10 people who have had their eyes treated by the same Sher-



House' clinics in Plainburgh, N.Y., and other U.S. centres treat some Canadians who cross the border, usually to escape long waiting lists for procedures back home

in Windsor, Ont. But now, the Canadian Medical Protective Association, which defends doctors in malpractice suits, is about to formally advise almost 38,000 members not to advertise south of the border. "We're concerned," says association spokeswoman Françoise Parent, "about having our physicians open to a court case that could be used in the United States." Not only would they face the risk of high judgments, but they would be ineligible for the association's legal assistance.

The American influx is apparent in the spacious waiting room at Lasek Vision in Montreal. A bespectacled man from New Hampshire jokes with the American couple beside him about injecting money into the Canadian economy. Nearly in a darkened room, Dr. Avi Walkman performs laser re-fractive surgery to correct the vision of a young Update News

brooke ophthalmologist. Back home, Richards says, the surgery would cost \$6,600. She paid \$1,900, including travel costs, for her Sherbrooke operation—showing a savings of \$4,700. "It sounds awful when you tell people you're going up because of the cost," says Richards, "but basically that's it."

Canadian plastic surgeons have treated small numbers of Americans for decades. Now, business is growing. Americans, primarily from neighbouring Michigan, make up about 70 per cent of the clientele for Dr. Ken Dedice in Sarnia, Ont. Most come for saline breast implants, with surgeons agreeing that breast augmentation is definitely back in vogue following the controversy over silicone-gel implants in the early 1990s. "It really has taken off," says Dedice, who describes his practice as "a shining example of how Canada

can tap into the American marketplace." Then there are the more exotic services. A majority of the 200 transsexuals that Drs. Yves Mérand and Pierre Beauregard operate on at their Montreal plastic surgery clinic each year are Americans. In Toronto, plastic surgeon Robin Soblis sees many foreign clients for a variety of services, including genital enhancements—penis extensions for men and labia reductions for women. As for the future of his American clientele, says Soblis, "I think as people are more connected to the Internet, this is going to go up dramatically." Vancouver plastic surgeon Kerit Rai also says the Internet has helped boost American business. But will U.S. practitioners simply cut their prices in the face of Canadian competition? Not according to Teal in Fort Erie. "American surgeons," asserts Teal, "will never work as cheaply as Canadian surgeons." ■



## Studio musician

Eve Egoyan keeps piano music current

**Eve Egoyan** went to great lengths to borrow the perfect outfit for her photo shoot—an elegant green strapless dress and a long jacket flecked with green and gold—but she couldn't come up with matching shoes. Standing barefoot (and only minimally embarrassed about it), the 35-year-old pianist and sister to film director **Asim Egoyan** is utterly charming—especially for someone who looks herself in a Toronto studio all day with hopes of resurrecting the way people hear piano music. With equal parts seriousness and youthful passion, she explains her intent to play the music of contemporary classical composers: "There is no artistic genre stuck in previous centuries quite like concert music," says Egoyan. "I think it is a potentially dying art form and I don't want to see the amazing instrument that I play as become obsolete."

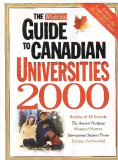
Egoyan is succeeding in her quest: Her debut CD, *New Music for Piano* (sheepskinrecords), released in October, is already in its second pressing, which is rare for this genre of music. She has a forthcoming performance at Canada House in London, and she recently received a Juno nomination for the design of her CD cover, which bears a picture of her ear. "I want people to be open to the experience of listening," she says of the image, "because with music, what else is there really?"

*Egoyan's her level of success is rarely afforded to today's classical pianists*



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## Daniel Igali opens the floodgates

**There were** more famous names in last week's Canadian Sports Awards, but Daniel Igali stole the show. The 25-year-old wrestler won national male athlete of the year as a gold in Toronto, ahead of 100-metre sprinter **Benji Simons** and speed skater **Johnny Warburton**. Igali, who, last October, won Canada's first-ever world wrestling title, captured the audience with an emotional acceptance speech—the name of Nigeria dedicated the award to **Muhammad Mahony**, a Bantams B.C. woman who became his adoptive mother when he came to Canada in 1994 and who died of cancer days after he won the world title. "She meant so much to me," the soft-spoken Igali said, clutching his trophy. "I know she is watching and that she is very happy. This is for her."

*Igali dedicated his award to his mom*



Wrestling Federation until a bitter breakup with his coach, **Vince McMahon**, in 1997. Last year, Hart's brother **Owen** died in a WWF stunt. Those and other tribulations have led Hart to become one of wrestling's hardest critics, arguing that it has become "too dangerous."

He cites his own concussion sustained from a kick by another wrestler as an example of recklessness. "The wrestlers that are being chucked out today know less and less about safety," says Hart. "Wrestlers end up like broken toys." And, Hart says, he's sad that the sport has lowered itself to violent and sexual storylines. "There are no family values," says Hart, "my kids don't watch it, kids that have any real sense of themselves don't watch it."



*Hart: facing the end of his turbulent career*

## A heavy-Hart-ed hitman takes aim

**A soft voice** and sad eyes are not the first qualities that spring to mind in connection with flamboyant World Championship Wrestling brawler **Bret Hart** (**Hillman**). Hart, 42, bears a distinctly melancholy air that is hardly in keeping with the no-holds-barred title of his new coffee-table book, *Bret Hart: The Best There Is, the Best There Was, the Best There Ever Will Be*. Among other things, he suffers from a concussion that has led to severe headaches, and confesses to feeling depressed and at times overwhelmed.

Part of the legendary Calgary wrestling family, Hart acknowledges he may now be facing the end of his turbulent career. He was a popular wrestler for the World



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Charles Gordon

## The big-box conundrum

**The House of Commons** standing committee on Canadian heritage has now heard from just about anyone who has anything to say about the woes of the Canadian book-selling industry. Booksellers, large and small, librarians and publishers addressed the committee in recent weeks. Last week, the writers spoke. The reader, the consumer, speaks every day at the cash register.

The committee was told by Chapters that the consumer is happy and more readers are being created. Independent booksellers told the committee that Chapters has put many of them out of business. The larger Canadian publishers, perhaps wanting to avoid offending their biggest customers, expressed their concerns more cautiously, avoiding the question of whether it is a good thing to have a giant retailer dominating the market.

Published writers have so many conflicts of interest on the question that the only hope is that they will cancel each other out. We want our Canadian publishers to prosper. We also want the independent stores to survive, since that support of Canadian writers has been going. At the same time, if Chapters doesn't take an interest in our books, they will sell less.

As Christopher Moore, chairman of The Writers' Union of Canada and best-selling author, pointed out, Chapters' ability to move and market best-sellers can match those authors fortunate to have written one. At the same time, authors have a fondness for the independent, who can create the word-of-mouth buzz that helps a non-blockbuster book take off.

Writers enter Chapters confidently, then see their book displayed. Not only their newest book but the one before that. Hence, they say. Maybe this place isn't so bad. Then there is the fidgety espresso and coffee thing, which writers are suckers for, as much as anyone else. Still, there is this nagging feeling. "There is now substantial evidence," Moore told the committee, "that the big store goes hand in hand with the big publisher and the big author, erasing a diminishing number of superior authors commands an ever larger share of book sales." Booksellers stock only best-sellers, which soon become the only type of books off the shelves of the publishing companies. This is not the situation now, because there has been a degree of enlightenment among both publishers and writers, but it is the prospect that worries publishers and writers.

The worst fear of publishers is the pressure a retail giant can exert either by buying or not buying. The committee was told of a book sold out at independent stores last Christmas, the independents unable to get the publisher to print more.

Charles Gordon is a columnist with The Ottawa Citizen.

because the publisher anticipated a flood of returns from Chapters after Christmas. The result: publisher, author and independent bookseller all lost sales. An added complication: the publisher may have underperformed in the first place after getting a he-hum from Chapters.

The smaller publishers, who give new writers their start and take risks that larger publishers won't, feel the loss of the independents more acutely. Toronto-based publisher Karl Sigler, representing the Literary Press Group of Canada, told the committee that the growth of Chapters has not made up for the decline of his sales through the independents. This worries because a nation's literature is not valued as sales figures. Authors whose work now sells in large numbers, writers who have helped to define us—the *Astors*, *Lawrence* and *Orlowski*—reached the top because somebody took a chance on them, a publisher or bookseller who wasn't thinking 30-per-cent off. The outcry before the heritage committee reflects a fear that we will not always have such people.

What can the committee recommend? Here it gets hard. Sensible measures were suggested—ending the GST on books, more support from the Canada Council for writers and independent bookstores, helping libraries. But nothing dramatic seems imminent. The government has allowed Chapters to happen and, if past history is any indication, is unlikely to see a threat to competition in the combination of Chapters and its distributing arm, *Regina*. The publishers, for their part, show no sign of wanting to combine in opposition to the mailing giant. The writers could do little more than ask the government to keep doing what it has been doing, and hope that the independents come back.

Maybe they will, although the committee also heard that the trend of retailing in this country is against it. That trend, in many other sectors than books, is to fewer stores and bigger ones. Whatever we may think about big-box stores, they would not succeed if people stayed away from them. Which is why the heritage committee should be talking to consumers, too. From Woodford, a retired vice-president of the Retail Council of Canada, described today's retail situation as even tougher than it was a decade or so ago when the corner grocery and hardware stores were under siege. Add new competition from Internet retailers and it gets even tougher, especially since consumer loyalty is another country. "The Canadian consumer is absolutely ruthless," Woodford told the committee.

So it appears. It is difficult to believe public information with the ingenuously and fine pointing of the big-box store can last. But it is also difficult to see how anybody other than the consumer can change it.

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## Books

# Are economies just like ecosystems?

Jane Jacobs makes a persuasive case that they are

### The Nature of Economies

By Jane Jacobs  
Random House, 190 pages, \$29.95

Consider a few things that develop in an egg, a river delta, California's fruit industry, the World Wide Web. Now imagine a theory showing how they all grow according to the same basic rules. It seems a tall order, perhaps an impossible one. Yet this is the task that Jane Jacobs takes up with her customary nerve in a slender new volume, *The Nature of Economies*. And such is Jacobs' reputation as a sage that her large and loyal following will rise for a moment to doubt her ability to rise to the challenge.

Her thesis will be skeptical. Jacobs' aim is to persuade us that to grasp how our common work we must first accept that they are in no way distinct from nature. She knows this is a tough sell, warning, "Readers unwilling or unable to breach a barrier that they imagine separates humankind and its works from the rest of nature will be unable to hear what this book is saying." Jacobs does much more, though, than merely plead for a leap of faith. She builds a grand argument in a series of lively conversations among a cast of thoughtful characters, the same technique (it worked for Marx, too) that she used in 1962's acclaimed *Systems of Survival*.

This time, Jacobs' alter ego is Hiram, a consultant who turns down financing for schemes trying to derive new products and processes from nature, an approach called "biomimicry." Hiram's work has prompted him to ponder the similarities between ecosystems and economies. His radical conclusion: not only do they often look the same, they

are the same. The theory unfolds in dialogues peppered with telling examples—from the success of a New York City shoe-repair supply firm to the failure of Newfoundland's cod fishery—that lead to fundamental principles. Jacobs has a light touch that slips a tricky paradox into place effortlessly, an abandoned field turns out with words and ends up growing a forest; Copenhagen starts out with just housing to sell and ends up opening a trade exchange.

The key idea is that economies and ecosystems always develop from simplicity to complexity. Complexity is better. Jacobs gleams this partly from looking at how human settlements get rich. Instead of overruling the quality of their experts, she ponders how communities use imports to diversify. She identifies two ways incorporating imports into their own exporting industries, or figuring out how to copy the imported stuff in local production. Clearly a vibrant city full of entrepreneurs can come up with more ways to win at this game than, say, a stodgy lumber town. And Jacobs thinks that nature, too, "abhors monoculture." A rainforest does more things with the energy that pours into it than does a desert. Moreover, complex webs are more resilient than those made up of a few strands. "Diverse ecosystems are so much more stable than one-crop plantations," says one of her characters.

It's nothing new to find Jacobs talking up diversity. Now 84, she first rose to fame in 1961 as author of *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, which revolutionized urban planning by celebrating complex, dynamic neighbourhoods. Some of her many left-leaning



The author: complexity is better than simplicity

fire—particularly in Toronto, where the former New Yorker has lived since the late-1960s and is identified with anti-development causes—will not like where the game is leading there. Jacobs finds economies so subtly varied that any government led to jump-start growth or subsidize industry can only end badly. "Nobody commands an economy that has vitality and potential," she has Hiram say. "It springs surprise upon surprise instead of breaking down and doing what's expected of it, or wished for it."

But this book should not be reduced to a set of policy prescriptions. It demands a deeper response—and a critical one. Do systems really push steadily towards complexity? And does that complexity make them more stable? In his 1993 book, *Making Democracy Work*, American Robert D. Putnam observed that while the complex society of northern Italy has been remarkably stable for at least 10 centuries, the less diverse south "has been once more stable, though less fruitful." Looking at non-human nature, is the intricate really more stable than the austere? A low degree still in average temperature can devastate a scorching coral reef or a sparsely populated tundra.

Different questions will occur to every engaged reader of this fine book. Jacobs' great success is the way the conversation she starts must surely develop, in that unpredictable way she sees everywhere, far beyond the final page.

John Geddes

# The Man Who Sailed to an Alternate Byzantium

By Brian Bethune

Guy Gavriel Kay is a superb storyteller and a writer who dominates a genre—historical fantasy—he virtually invented. He is one of Canada's best-selling authors at home and abroad, with more than 1.2 million copies of his eight novels in print in 14 languages. But Kay is also a man obstinately set on a quixotic quest, determined to see his work accepted as respectable literature. And the wider recognition he seeks has proved elusive. "Most critics are still not willing to accept that narrative and serious literature can go together," he shrugs. Not that Kay disagrees up. It is only a matter of time, he believes, until North America catches up to European levels of respect for fantasy. And Kay will be there. "My optimistic take is that my sheer stubbornness may persuade resistant people to take a look I'm holding on the narrative angle."

And on the fantasy angle. Kay's latest bid for mainstream acceptance is his most ambitious work yet. The newly released *Land of Empires* (Penguin, \$52.95) completes *The Sarnian Music*, a two-volume series begun in 1998 with *Sailing to Sarnath*. *Music* is just that, in Kay's intricately fit together, over the course of 1,000 pages, a dazzling array of characters from an alternate Byzantine Empire, while pursuing what is for him a familiar theme. In one story or another, all his novels touch on the relationship of artists to political power, and wrestle with the question of who controls a society's memory and history. In *Land of Empires* almost every character is obsessed with leaving a legacy.

Byzantine politics and historical crises are a far cry from Kay's quiet life in Toronto with his wife, Laura, and their two sons, Samuel, 9, and Matthew, 4. And although Kay is the son of writer often referred to by critics as "fiscally indulgent," meaning he tends to become pensive when discussing his work, he is quite capable of poking fun at his own earnestness. He came home from one 7 a.m. interview to find Laura, who works in marketing, waiting for him on the porch with a reproach: "You said the word 'iconography' on breakfast TV!" "The hell it is," laughs Kay. "It's that even as I said it, I thought, 'Laura's going to kill me.'"

Historical questions are also at a considerable remove from what the 45-year-old native of Weyburn, Sask., used to write. After attending law school at the University of Toronto and being called to the bar in 1981, he has

never practiced. Kay became a writer for CBC Radio's *Scales of Justice*. Three years later, while still writing radio scripts, he published the first volume of his hugely popular *Foundation Trilogy* novels, a now-classic trilogy written in the tradition of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. (In fact, Kay is a close friend of Tolkien's son, Christopher.) Kay remains passionate about what the fantasy genre can offer author and reader alike: "Fantasy is a main line to the traditional myths and archetypes that nurture the inner growth of the human spirit. It connects more directly to those universal wells than anything else." But after *Music*, Kay became ever more fascinated with the idea of exploring historical problems through fantasy. So a decade ago, in an extraordinary innovation, Kay came up with a genre all his own.

The result is five sprawling novels of historical fantasy set against recognizable backgrounds, such as the ancient Constantinople of *The Sarnian Music*. "So far, I've managed to bring most of my readers along with me," says Kay, referring to the fantasy fans who have stuck by him despite the steady decline in imagined elements necessitated by the historical factor. Kay reads widely, almost at random, when

searching for a new novel. For the Byzantine setting, he reads, a book called *The Helping Hand, Men and Women in the Ancient World* proved quite helpful. "What Kay is seeking in his research is what he calls 'the most that emerges from an era.' And that general cultural milieu is all he adopts from his sources. Everything else is altered to fit the needs of the story: rules, religions, geography, even the chronology—even separated by centuries, in actual history are often collapsed into a single era. It is a style that has allowed the author to keep what he values in fantasy while lacking his sophisticated themes."

In *Tigane* (1990), Kay used a setting drawn from the quarrelling city-states of Renaissance Italy to create a page-turning narrative that has sold more than 200,000 copies. The novel was also his first exploration of how ruling powers seek to establish their version of events, controlling culture by rewriting history and, as in the case in *Tigane*, even obliterating a language. In Eastern Europe, with its still-fresh memories of Stalinist historical misuses, *Tigane* has brought Kay a large following. *A Song for Aristotle* (1992), set in medieval France, and *The Lions of Al-Rassan* (1995), drawn from Moorish Spain, write a similar thematic anatomy, brilliantly laying out the human core enacted by ideological dogmas.

## Canada's Guy Gavriel Kay virtually invented historical fantasy, a genre that has won him thousands of readers

That's the whole point to Kay: Cruelty and oppression are "traps of the human condition," Kay says, and stand out starkly in invented worlds. "By putting a fantasy spin on real history I have a fighting chance of detaching the universal part of the story from the anchored time and place," he asserts as good as his genius for storytelling, has a field day with motifs as novel. By the time the second volume comes, *Citrus* is just one of a vast crowd of characters, all interacting one another in exactly the way glass beads placed together in a well-told story neighbouring pieces in relief. Every cloak and cushion, every character and anecdote, disappears every time to leave a mark before death—the *Land of Empires* referred to in the title—dawns them.

The image slowly coming to life within the sanctuary is physically threatened by iconoclasts, fundamentalists who seek to destroy sacred images they regard as idolatrous. The mosaic is also vulnerable to another kind of loss. Body armor and rule change as their own movement and, in a first move on one of Kay's persistent themes, it is an—now brave political power—that emerges as the controller of memory, the true Lord of Empires. After all, as Kay notes, all historians know of Byzantium the man is his image as recorded by his court mosaicist.

It seems to be seen whether *The Sarnian Music*, powerfully written and compellingly readable as it is, will make much of a dent in the ingrained prejudices of literary readers. Nor will Kay's dexterous complex work bring him any of the adolescent boys who turn other fantasies into megafans. What *Music* readers will do is crown the author's reputation in the niche he has carved for himself. When it comes to imaginary worlds, Guy Gavriel Kay is the Lord of Empires. ■



Byzantine mosaic, Kay (opposite) exploring cruelty and oppression

# Desire, deathly and dangerous

One tale features a necrophile, the other, betrayed spouses

By Brian D. Johnson

In *Kissed*, a first feature by Vincenzo's Lynne Spagnoli, actress Molly Parker scored an unlikely triumph with her Genre-winning portrayal of an embittered wife who enjoys making love with dead white males. Now, four years later, another Canadian director has made an achieved debut—and another actress has won a Genie—with a bittersweet romance involving necrophiles. But in this case, the theme is more oblique, and the object of desire that gets un-upped from a body bag is a woman.

*Post Mortem* was a box-office hit last summer in Quebec. And at the Genie Awards in January, in Montreal winter-direc-tion, Louis Bélanger, won the Claude Jutra Award for best first feature, while his star, Sylvie Moreau, won the prize for best actress. Both awards are richly deserved—the film is compelling—but Bélanger's script has some serious shortcomings.

It is a story of two lonely souls brought together by a fluke of fate. Linda (Moreau) is a single mother who spends her nights seducing men only to knock them unconscious and steal their valuables—a hooker with a heart of fool's gold. Christian (Gabriel Arcand) is a police who knows no Dalmatian and works in a morgue. It's hard to explain how these two lost souls come together without giving away the plot. Let's just say that after one of her seductions backfires, Linda is presumed dead and Christian is presumed guilty of murdering her.

Using flashbacks to enter an off-batter narrative, Bélanger keeps the viewer guessing. Playing a curious mix of aggressor and victim, Moreau brings an exotic intrigue to her morose character. And Arcand shows an aching vulnerability as the working stiff who finds



Scene from *Post Mortem* with Arcand (right), a meeting of two lonely souls

acquired love at work, among the staff. But the script has some odd missteps—Linda asks credit cards to a friend for \$1,000, as if her victims wouldn't have cancelled them. And for a drama that appears as such, during the trial, the equal-opportunity adoration at the end seems awfully soft. Perhaps Canadian cinema just needs more time. Four best and brightest young directors kept at it, we may yet live to see the Great Canadian Necrophile Movie.

*Post-Mortem* Molly Parker, meanwhile, has found a promising afterlife in ensemble pieces such as *Woodlark*, *Swindler*, and *The Four Seasons*. Her latest is *Ladies Room*, a Canada-Britain co-production, filmed in Montreal, which milks an impressive cast around an erotic script. The cinematic comedy also features Lorraine Bracco, Greta Scacchi, Victoria Beckham and the newly iconic John Malkovich. The first half takes place at a theatre, where a flood forces the play's star (Bracco) to share her dressing room with an ambitious young actress (Parker), who is having an affair with the star's playwright husband. The second half takes place in an opulent house, where a very pregnant woman (Scacchi) ends up in the ladies room, consoling a distraught woman (Parker)

who is mired in a disastrous affair with the unknown child's father (Malkovich). A first feature directed by Gabriela Christou (Bernardo Bertolucci's Oscar-winning editor), *Ladies Room* was written by four women, and the script has the whiff of collective compromise. It's a gothic of fully theatrical scenes. And there is some glossiness in watching good actors make a meal of it. In an extended makeup scene, with Bracco in front of the mirror, Parker has the flimsy first moment—the mad young actress who ages with the aging actress while lying on cat-eye moccasins. Also, after watching her on a many plan, un-theatrical scene, it's refreshing to see Parker as a motorcycle-riding vixen in black leather and pink pyrotechnics. But the story is a shattering compromise. And Malkovich in a ludicrous punchline—falling down stairs and priding in an Italian accent. It's dangerous to let both losses hit the kind of actor who tends to overplay weak material. Parker, on the other hand, makes even the preposterous scene real. In the movie's only framing device, her character looks back on her life from a white powder room, purgatory. And like *Post Mortem*'s Moreau, she brushes life into a near-death experience. **B**

## Tom Green's Cancer Special

Some people, when diagnosed with a serious disease, vow to change their lives. Not shock comic Tom Green. The 28-year-old star of the MTV-*Comedy News* hit *The Tom Green Show* was diagnosed with testicular cancer last week and underwent surgery in Los Angeles last week—the first time to remove one of his testicles, and the second to take out the surrounding lymph nodes. Shadowing the Ottawa native during the second hospital stay was a camera crew from MTV, who taped the whole experience for a forthcoming episode of the show, to be called *The Green Special*. After the surgery, the crew followed



Boyfriend, Geraldine

Green as he approached people in the hospital and offered to show them his scar. The comedian has also upped the Tom Green's Nuts Cancer Fund to raise \$10,000 (U.S.) for research.

His parents flew from Ottawa to join him at the hospital. And he was comforted by his girlfriend, actress Drew Barrymore. Green also re-taped his well-known message from fans on his Web site—most of them in costume as his sense of humor. "I will have two testis," wrote Chris Kanevich of Austin, Tex. "Let me know if you'd like me to read you one." Knowing Green, he might just take him up on the offer.

## Who is reading what, where

Want to know what people are reading? Online bookseller Amazon.com makes it easy by tracking purchasing orders from its Web site. In the United States, the company can provide best-seller lists for novels, workplaces and educational institutions. The top 10 results are then posted on its Internet site. For the rest of the world, Amazon.com tracks book sales by country. So, what are Canadians reading? *Harry Potter: All three* (J. K. Rowling's novels are on the Top 10 list—as is *Deception: With Usability: The Practice of Simplicity* by Jakob Nielsen, for all the budding dot-com millionaires.



## Theatre

For the past 38 years, World Theatre Day has been an occasion for both theatre people and audiences to celebrate the power of the performing arts. Always held on March 27, the event is organized by the International Theatre Institute, a Paris-based organization established in 1948 by UNESCO, and is celebrated in more than 90 countries. This year in Canada, celebrations will continue until April 2 to allow for the presentation of more than 50 productions across the country ([www.worldtheatreday.com](http://www.worldtheatreday.com)).



Tremblay

Each year, the day is marked by the reading of an international message, authored by a world-renowned theatre personality. For the first time in the history of the event, the honour has been conferred on a Canadian, Montreal playwright Michael Tremblay, whose play *The Pleasure of Saving Her* Open is now showing in Montreal and opens in Toronto on April 10. Tremblay, the winner of the 1999 Governor General's Performing Arts Award, is a prolific company: previous authors include Arthur Miller, Laurence Olivier, Vicki Mavel and Pablo Neruda.

## Best-Sellers

Fiction	TOP 10	WEEKS ON LIST
1. <b>ENCOUNTERING THE GODS OF THE GARDEN</b> Cory Doctorow (3)	1	2
2. <b>A HISTORY OF THE FUTURE</b> William Gibson (2)	2	3
3. <b>A DARK HISTORY</b> Neil Gaiman (2)	3	4
4. <b>BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE</b> Neil Gaiman (2)	4	5
5. <b>THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD</b> Neil Gaiman (2)	5	6
6. <b>THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD</b> Neil Gaiman (2)	6	7
7. <b>THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD</b> Neil Gaiman (2)	7	8
8. <b>THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD</b> Neil Gaiman (2)	8	9
9. <b>THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD</b> Neil Gaiman (2)	9	10
10. <b>THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD</b> Neil Gaiman (2)	10	11

## How to be a genius

Into the middle of a debate versus nature debate that has veered sharply in favour of nature comes Michael Innes. In *Genius* (Explained) (Cambridge), the British psychology professor argues that genius—which once defined nurtured talent—is a product of an innate talent but made through a series of happenings. The book is a tribute to Albert Einstein and the British statesman, who argues that genius comes from exploring personal circumstances with a focus on the rest of us. Innes' work isn't up to Michael Faraday for assistance, a 19th-century partner in harnessing electricity, was appointed to a bookmaker at age 13. Faraday educated himself by reading everything that entered the shop—in Innes, a case of genius meeting its opportunity.

## Television

The six-part BBC-TV series *The League of Gentlemen*, which was a hit in Britain last year, starts airing on April 2. The half-hour show stars three British comedians—Mark Gatiss, Steve Pemberton and Reece Shearsmith—who play 60 characters, all dysfunctional inhabitants of the imaginary North Yorkshire town of Royston Vasey.

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## Entertainment Notes

### Yucatan yuk-fest

Arabs were offended by *Aladdin*, and North American natives took issue with *Pocahontas*. But now, with a cartoon about ancient Mayan civilization, Hollywood animators seem to be reaching their political pit and o's. DreamWorks Pictures went out of its way to be culturally correct with *The Road to El Dorado*, having an archaeologist and a historian as advisors. But given the preposterousness of the story, you have to wonder why the studio bothered.



Chel, a lost treasure

This is basically a tale of two 15th-century teenagers (voiced by Kevin Kline and Kenneth Branagh) who get washed up on the shores of the New World and land in a five-star Mayan Club Med. While one of them runs off to get wooed by the princess, the other gets seduced by Chel, a ruble nurse (Renee Powell) who has to be the most racist singer ever to ramp through a Disney-style animated feature. Meanwhile, an evil army of one-eyed wizards looms on the horizon. But there's no genocide here. It's a family show and, after all, real history is too scary for kids.

Then there is the music. Elton John and Tim Rice, the Oscar-winning team behind *The Last King*, have crafted a whack of original songs, which we will so doubt be hearing from now until Mexico forces over Bar there's nothing Mayan, or even Latin, about them—they sound like they came from Pop City, U.S.A. Still, *El Dorado* works as a Yucatan yuk-fest. It's a bag-screen theme park where kids can enjoy the ride and parents won't be too offended or bored, as long as they don't stop to think.

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## Mistake by the lake (II)

On a chilly November afternoon in 1964, the new-boys-on-the-block B.C. Lions, under the presidency of a wonderful guy by name of Stan Delbridge, won their first ever Grey Cup over the Hamilton Tiger-Cats in that dismal Ed Stinson Place stadium in Toronto.

Everybody who was anybody in Hagerson, of course, was there and swaddled in the wind whipped in from the water and pellets of rain landed like bullets on your cheeks.

In this same "mistake by the lake" stadium, some chilly years later, the opening spring game of the just-born Toronto Blue Jays was featured by snow.

Fast-forward to 1983, Toronto Argonauts, once the home of Joe Krol and Royal Capeland, are in the Grey Cup in Vancouver, in the new B.C. Place with the Telus roof held up by six pylons. Everyone who is anyone in Toronto is there, led by Premier Bill Davis, cabinet ministers, millionaires.

They sit down in their VIP boxes, took off their jackets, see themselves in November and looked at one another. "This would not do. This fit-it-never-out in the home docks can build a covered stadium?" When Toronto, cradle of the universe as we know, hadn't thought of it? Something had to be done, quickly.

The result was an engineering marvel of the world as it exists, the majestic SkyDome, with no sliding, new-you-see-it, now-you-don't roof. Exclusive executive boxes coming more than a Bentley might the upper reaches and the Toronto boys charged more for beer than you needed for a martini.

It is now a new century and the SkyDome? Tissue Dove like dome. Nobody goes there anymore. Civilization has moved on and there has been discovered an amazing fact. All the hubbub at Queen's Park and their corporate buddies didn't know what they were doing.

Toronto is desperately bidding, for the second time, for the Olympic Games, this time—up against Toronto's Beijing—in 2008. There is only one problem. The size, attraction of all Olympics is the track events. And they require, naturally, a 400-m track. Guess what? The fabulously over-budget SkyDome—\$600 million rather than \$150 million—can't encompass a 400-m track.

A new stadium, as the mistake by the lake was torn down in 1959, would have to be built. And guess what? Toronto, being essentially more American than Canadian in its pursuit

of the buck, wants a National Football League franchise.

Only one problem. SkyDome, with some 50,000 seats, is too small for the NFL requirements—franchise teams—at least 65,000 seats. They would have to be built a football-only stadium. Plus the 400-m track Olympic stadium, which is useless for pro football, because it keeps the customers too far from the action, the seats, the banners, the coaches sweating from the sidelines.

You want more? You're welcome. There has since been built the Air Canada Centre—fondly known as The Hangar—where the Toronto Raptors pro hoops team has moved. SkyDome is too big for basketball. It's too small for NFL football. It doesn't have the space for an Olympic track.

More? All those corporate guys in their executive SkyDome boxes, laments as busy as the TV set as you don't actually have to watch the game, had become seated on the hangar that approached film-negative prices, and the hangar that settles in after the Blue Jays won two World Series. A madhouse town owned by beer people in Belgium does not inspire.

These same guys have viewed their wallets over to The Hangar where the Raptors are winners with Vince Carter, the most exciting player in the NBA since Michael Jordan, performs

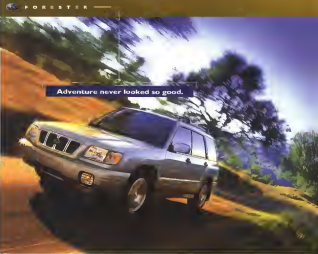
basoon-sounding mistakes more every other night. While everyone ignores the Argos over at the BoreDome and the Jays admit they don't have the money to compete anymore.

How bad are things at the White Elephant? The other night was the faux sensation Ricky Martin. Some 20,000 spectators, most not quite reaching puberty and none, did not see someone whose hair-braids were better than his voice.

Most obvious was the large curtain—while a cleverly crafted smoke-and-mirror of backdrop dancers and laser lights covered the lack of talent—that that off at least half of SkyDome's seats. No one was allowed to see the sad evidence that almost no one was there.

Nobody in Toronto, which has the great irony of wanting to be New York, will admit that SkyDome is an embarrassing mistake. Not big enough for the Olympics or the NFL, too big for the Raptors and for the Maple Leafs, too big to displace Betsy's beer-brew.

It's an engineering marvel that no one thought through. It's all the fault of those guys sitting in B.C. Place in darkness



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